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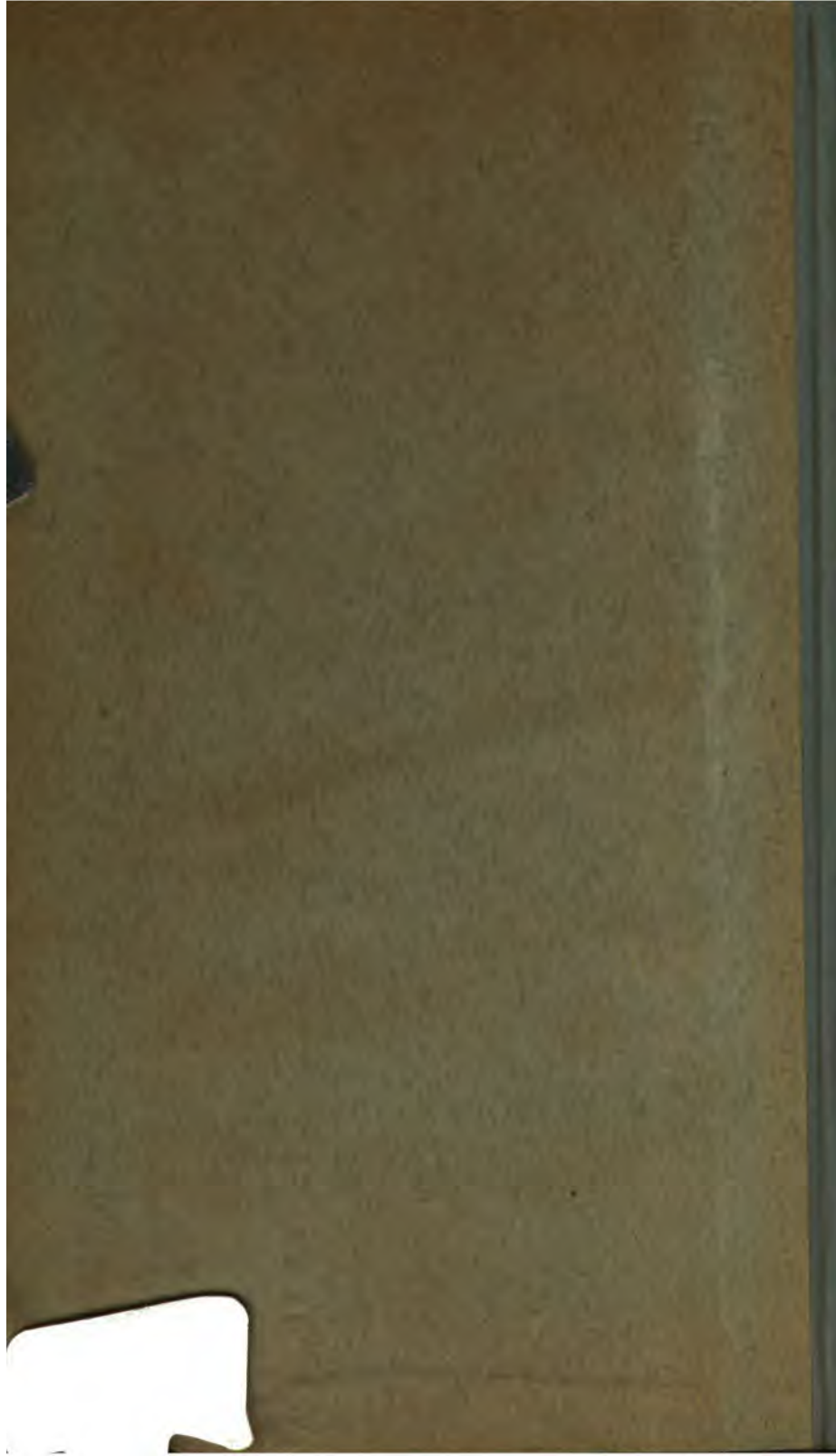
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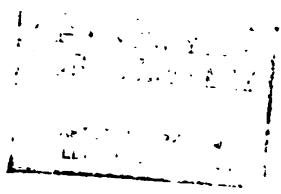
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# **HISTORY OF TAUNTON.**

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ST MARY MAGDALEN, TAUNTON.

THE  
**HISTORY OF TAUNTON,**

**In the County of Somerset.**

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ORIGINALLY WRITTEN  
BY THE LATE JOSHUA TOULMIN, D. D.

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A NEW EDITION,  
*GREATLY ENLARGED,*  
AND BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME,  
BY JAMES SAVAGE.

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Sed tamen ipsa eadem est.*

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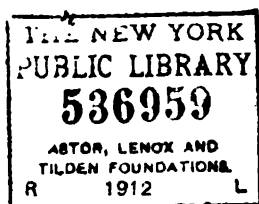
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A MUNICIPAL CHARTER FOR TAUNTON.—A communication received from the Privy Council states that their lordships have agreed to advise her Majesty to grant a municipal charter to Taunton. The parliamentary is to be the municipal boundary of the borough, which is to be divided into three wards, each having six councillors, who, with six aldermen, will give a council of twenty-four members. The town was incorporated in 1627, but the charter was forfeited, owing to the disloyalty of the inhabitants during the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion. Having been subsequently renewed, the charter was lost in 1792, in consequence of a squabble over the election of mayor. The Liberals petitioned for the new charter.

## DR. TOULMIN'S PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

**T**HE history of a particular town, though it cannot, in the variety of the events it comprehends, or the grandeur of the subject it handles, be compared with that of a nation or empire, yet connects with it importance and utility. It is peculiarly interesting to natives; and it furnishes for their younger years a proper introduction to more general and extensive history. Here may, advantageously, commence their researches into the state and events of past ages. A taste for historical reading may be easily and agreeably given to youth, by beginning with facts taking place at home; and the connexion of them with national affairs will awaken a curiosity to become acquainted with the revolutions their country hath seen.

The history of a town is united with that of the kingdom to which it belongs, and with that of the ages through which it has stood. Publications of this kind are, particularly, serviceable towards an accurate and complete provincial history. They should not, therefore, because they are local, be neglected and overlooked. The history of a town constitutes a part of that whole, which commands attention by the magnitude of the object; and they, who, by birth, or residence, or any other circumstance, are connected with it, feel a peculiar concern in a review of those actions of which it has been the theatre.

In these views the HISTORY OF TAUNTON may claim attention. Few towns, in this kingdom, have had a larger share in events of national importance; or can furnish a detail of transactions, more adapted to give lessons, on liberty and virtue, to the rising generation.

But though Taunton is, on these accounts, a very proper subject for the purpose, its history had never been attempted, till, about the year 1780, Mr. Locke, of Burnham, published proposals for it. From his ingenuity, and the attention he had given to the subject, the friends of his design promised themselves information and entertainment. But the multiplicity of his engagements, some unpleasant incidents, and his removal from the town, after he had for a short time been a resident in it, led him to drop his purpose; and, in a friendly manner, to give the materials which he had collected for it, to the printer.

The author of this work, after Mr. Locke had entirely relinquished his design, yielded to the inclination which he had felt, before Mr. Locke's proposals appeared, to draw up a HISTORY OF TAUNTON. His papers afforded a clue to direct enquiry, and appeared to offer ample materials; but, as the authorities quoted will shew, he has by no means confined himself to them. In reality, he has executed his work according to his own ideas, and availed himself of Mr. Locke's manuscript only as he has of any other writer from whom he could borrow information. On this account he has found it a work, which required more industry in collecting, and more labour in composing, than he, at first, conceived would be necessary.

The impatience, with which this publication has been expected, he owns, is encouraging to him; but though he ought not to affect a modesty, which becomes authors on their first appearance before the tribunal of the public, yet he cannot, on the present occasion, divest himself of all timidity and diffidence, lest expectation should be disappointed. It is the first essay of the kind from his pen. His pretensions to the character of an antiquary are very small. And some particulars, proper to be enlarged upon in such a history, will not entertain or interest many.

He hopes, however, that he has not given his attention to useless trifles, nor directed his thoughts to subjects totally foreign from the nature of the profession in which he appears. He has brought forward some curious particulars, which in a few years more, for want of being recorded, would be irrecoverably lost. His work will hold up many instances of exertion, directed to the benefit of the town, as domestic examples, to awaken a spirit of emulation. And it will display before the reader a scene which must instruct and

affect every one, who has any idea what *liberty*, civil or religious, means ; LIBERTY, that best birth-right of Englishmen, and, next to Christianity, the most precious gift of heaven.

It has given him pleasure to hold up to remembrance the names of those gentlemen, who have, in any respect, rendered public services to the Town of TAUNTON. This he, will be bold to say, he has done, with candour and impartiality. It is scarcely necessary, he would hope, to caution the reader against considering such a tribute of praise, paid where the author conceived it was merited, as pledging himself to any character ; though it is a point of virtue with him to do justice to all.

He cannot conclude this preliminary address without testifying the lively sense he has of the honour done him, by the ready and free patronage and numerous subscriptions, with which this work has been encouraged ; for which he returns his sincere and cordial thanks. The gentlemen, whose obliging communications he has noticed in the proper places, are requested to accept his grateful acknowledgments : amongst them the Rev. Mr. Collinson, from whom the public expects the History of Somerset, deserves particular mention. He has a very respectful and grateful sense of the attention paid to his design, by other gentlemen, to whom the pages of the history do not give him an opportunity to refer ; of the politeness with which James Bernard, esq. of Crowcombe, offered him a free access to the valuable library of the late Thomas Carew, esq. of the friendship of William Hawker, esq. of Poundisford-lodge, for pointing out, and lending him some writers, who would not have otherwise fallen in his way, and from whom important information was to be derived ; of the handsome manner, in which the learned Dr. G. Moore, archdeacon of Cornwall, not only favoured him with admittance to the library of the cathedral of Exeter, but personally attended him in his researches ; and of the readiness, with which sir Thomas Gunston furnished him with the use of an authenticated copy of the charter of Taunton.

He likewise feels himself much indebted for many observations and considerable assistance to the ingenious and learned Mr. Henry Norris. In the enumeration of the people of the town, besides the aid he received from Mr. Norman and Mr. Weekes, through their respective neighbourhoods, he owed much to the share, which the

Rev. Mr. Darracott obligingly took in this part of his undertaking, by accompanying him through the town, and assisting his enquiries through the whole of the survey.

He reflects on all these assistances with pleasure, as marks of personal respect, and as the testimonies of approbation given to his intended work, which inspire him with some degree of confidence, in submitting the execution of it to the candour of his friends and the public.

J. T.

TAUNTON, May 21st, 1791.

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## PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

**I**T is upwards of thirty years since the late Dr. **TOULMIN** published the *History of Taunton*, which has now been long out of print, and has become extremely scarce. Towards the close of his life, he himself had meditated a new edition; but before his design was completed, the world was deprived of the labours of the venerable and learned author.

The great interest which the public has lately taken in topographical history encouraged the Editor to prepare a new and enlarged edition of Dr. Toulmin's work. There are not many towns in England that afford more abundant materials for history than that of Taunton, whether it is considered in its ancient state under the West Saxon monarchs, previously to its being annexed to the episcopal see of Winchester, or in modern times for the part it has taken in the political transactions of the reigns of the Tudors and Stuarts.

The great changes and improvements which have taken place in the last fifty years in every principal town in the kingdom, whether we admire the architectural embellishments displayed in private and public edifices, or the improvement of roads, and the consequent increase and facility of intercourse between the more distant parts of the empire; whether we look at the increase of commerce and manufactures, and their constant attendant luxury; whether we contemplate the extension and progress of science and the arts, and every branch of learning, or regard the rapid march of intellectual power; every thing exhibits, that, in this country, the human mind, during the above-mentioned period, has attained an elevation of grandeur



unknown to former ages, and not paralleled by any nation of the world.

In these improvements—in the extension and progress of human knowledge—in the advancement of science and literature—and in the increase of trade and manufactures—Taunton, as compared with the rest of the kingdom, has borne its full share; which the following pages will most amply testify.

The additions made to the text of Dr. Toulmin's work are marked by an inverted comma; the notes which were in the former edition are distinguished by the initial letter T; the others, except those to which some initial letter is annexed, are by the present Editor. The additions which have been made from Dr. Toulmin's manuscripts are referred to as such at the bottom of the pages where they occur.

The most pleasing and grateful duty of the Editor is to return his warmest thanks to those gentlemen who have been so obliging as to render him assistance by the contribution of materials for the improvement of this work, or in the exercise of their influence in procuring him additional names to his list of subscribers. Among these, the first place is due to Dr. BLAKE, of Taunton. To this gentleman, who unites the love of science and literature with the most active benevolence and humanity, the Editor is indebted for the manuscripts and other papers of the late Dr. TOULMIN, of which he has largely availed himself in the following pages.

To JOHN GOODFORD, of Yeovil, esq. whose extensive reading and knowledge of British history and antiquities is only surpassed by the liberality of his communications, he is under particular obligations for many valuable papers; more especially for numerous additions to that part of his work, which embraces the history of the duke of Monmouth's rebellion.

To the Rev. H. BOWER, M. A. Vicar of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, and the Rev. JOHN TOWNSEND,

**Incumbent Curate of Taunton St. James**, for much information collected from the registers of those parishes; and to the latter gentleman for various papers relating to the grammar school.

**To WILLIAM KINGLAKE**, esq. lord of the manor of Taunton late Priory, for many particulars relating to the late monastery of Augustine Canons in this town.

**To RICHARD MEADE**, of Taunton, esq. for the loan of many papers connected with the history of the dissolution of the late corporation, and the early history of the parliamentary representation of the borough.

**To Mrs. BAWDEN**, of Chard, for some ancient documents relating to the priory, and for several particulars respecting the families of Bonville, Fitzwarine, and Bouchier.

**To Mr. WILLIAM UPCOTT**, assistant librarian of the London Institution, in Moor-fields, London, he returns his cordial thanks for many valuable communications. The rich stores, with which the library of that establishment abounds, renders Mr. Upcott's friendship highly valuable to the topographical historian, and his desire to oblige is only equalled by the extent of his bibliographical researches.

**To Mr. HENRY NORRIS**, of Taunton, whose various and erudite learning is too well known to need eulogium, and who is gratefully commemorated by Dr. Toulmin, in the first edition of this work, the Editor owes many valuable suggestions for the improvement of this edition. He is also indebted to this gentleman for his assistance, as well in the account of the episcopal mint and coinage of Taunton, as in that of the town pieces and tokens struck in this town in the seventeenth century.

**To Mr. JOHN BLUETT**, of Taunton, for various information relating to the coinage of tokens in this town, of which he has a large number in his valuable collection of English coins.

**To Mr. FREDERICK LAKE**, of Taunton, he owes

the engraving of the tower of St. Mary Magdalen's church, which forms the frontispiece to this work. The Editor, in mentioning this plate, wishes to observe, that it is the first specimen in this style of engraving by a young and self-taught artist, who is a native of the town, and promises by the versatility of his genius to add some celebrity to the place of his birth.

He is also indebted for the use of many scarce books of reference, and for various information, to other gentlemen who have kindly interested themselves in the progress of this work. Among these are Edward Coles, esq. Clerk of the Peace for the county of Somerset—Mr. W. P. Pinchard, who also furnished him with an account of the feoffee lands—Samuel Norman, esq.—Robert Leigh, esq.—Dr. Macdonald—Colonel Pearson—and Mr. H. J. Leigh, who also favoured him with some particulars relating to the intended renewal of the charter.

He concludes with expressing his deep sense of the obligations under which he feels himself to those numerous friends who have encouraged and patronized him in this publication. If Providence should spare his life, it is his intention to proceed in giving the History of the Hundred of Taunton Dean, and of the circumjacent parishes in the county of Somerset, together with a genealogical account and pedigrees of the principal families, and biographical sketches of remarkable persons connected with the western part of the county.

J. S.

TAUNTON, February 11th, 1822.

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THE  
**History of Taunton.**

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**CHAPTER I.**

**SITUATION AND ANTIQUITY OF TAUNTON—DR. AMORY'S POEM DESCRIPTIVE OF TAUNTON—VALE OF TAUNTON-DEAN—TAUNTON PROBABLY KNOWN TO THE ROMANS—TAUNTON IN THE TIME OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS—MANOR OF TAUNTON-DEAN ANNEXED TO THE SEE OF WINCHESTER—ITS VALUE—DESCRIPTION OF TAUNTON FROM DOMESDAY BOOK—HUNDRED AND MANOR OF TAUNTON-DEAN—TENURE OF THE MANOR OF TAUNTON-DEAN—PRIORY OF AUGUSTINE CANONS—CARMELITES—LEPER HOUSE—SUFFRAGAN BISHOP OF TAUNTON—ARCHDEACONRY OF TAUNTON—LIST OF THE ARCHDEACONS OF TAUNTON.**

**T**ANTUN,<sup>1</sup> TAWNTON, THONTON, or in the modern mode of spelling the word, TAUNTON, derives its name, according to the opinion of some,

<sup>1</sup> This was the Anglo-Saxon name. See *Chronicon Saxonicum*, operâ Edmundi Gibson. T.

Dr. Henry, in his *History of England*, (vol. iv. Appx.) in describing a map of Britain, according to the *Saxon Chronicle*, in which is found the name of this town, "*Tantun*," explains that word as meaning "*Twigtown*."—See note 1, page 5.

Dr. Johnson, on the authority of Bishop Gibson, says that *Ton* and *Tun*, in the names of places, are derived from the Saxon, *Tun*, a hedge or wall, and this seems to be from *dun*, a hill.



from the river Thone or Tone.<sup>1</sup> This river<sup>1</sup> rises at a place called Biverton Bottom, under Brindon Hill,<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Clatworthy, washes Huish, divides Chipstable from Wiveliscombe, Milverton from Stawley,

<sup>1</sup> Whitaker, whose opinion on these subjects deserves respectful notice, gives a very probable etymology of its name from the British word *Avon*, a river.—“ I have previously shewn, says he, (History of Manchester, vol i. p. 220) the word *Avon* to have been frequently contracted into *Aun*, *An*, or *Un*, and as *D'Avon*, and *T'Avon* are both the same with it, so are they contracted in like manner; the latter is reduced into *Tayne*, the name of a frith in Scotland; into *Taune* or *Tone*, that of a river in Somersetshire; and into *Teyne*, that of a current in Staffordshire.” H.

In the Gaelic language, from which most of the names of places in England are derived, *An* means water, or stream, or river. *Ain* and *On* are synonymes of *An*, and with the consonant prefix *T*, *Tain* or *Ton* was formed; and a town, the principal or only one probably, being seated on the border of the river, it was called *Tain-town*, or *Ton-town*, which expressed, and emphatically too, the “ Town on the banks of the river.” E.

<sup>2</sup> The fish in this river are trout, eel, perch, gudgeon, flounder, roach, and dace, with a few pike and salmon. T.

To these may be added the lamprey and lamprey-eel, found at the several locks. The salmon-trout, the shad or allis, the carp, and tench, are also occasionally caught in this river.

For a detailed account of the fish found in the river Tone, see the Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> The name of *Brindon Hill* is a remarkable example of the accumulation of words, in different languages, meaning the same thing. The Britons called a hill, *Bryn*,—on the arrival of the Saxons the latter added their word for hill, *dun*, to the former, and called it *Bryn Dun*; in modern times we annex our word *hill*, to the British and Saxon terms, and now call it *Brindon Hill*.

Or, Brindon may be derived from *Bren*, which in the ancient British or Welsh, was a term for king, head, or chief; and well might this grand chain of mountains have that superior prefix. E.

Stawley from Ashbrittle and Holcombe, Kittesford from Langford, and Langford from Wellington; from whence it flows on, through Bradford and Bishop's-Hull, to Taunton. Here it becomes navigable, and, near Burrow-Bridge, unites itself with the *Parrett*. The latter river then running through Bridgwater, receives the *Brent* at Burnham, and soon after empties itself into that part of the Bristol Channel, called Bridgwater Bay.

The town stands on the great road leading from the Land's End in Cornwall, to the north of England, lying between Exeter and Bridgwater, thirty-three miles north-east of the former, and eleven miles south of the latter. The situation rendering it the thoroughfare from Bristol and Bath to Exeter and Plymouth, it is enlivened with a continual succession of travellers, passing through it on pleasure or business; as this road is often preferred, on that account, to the more southern one from London to the west. Its distance from London through Salisbury is one hundred and forty-six miles west by south, and through Bath one hundred and fifty-five miles.—Longitude  $3^{\circ} 15' W.$  and Latitude  $51^{\circ} 6' N.$

Taunton has ever been a principal town in the county of Somerset. Before the modern improvements were introduced it was deemed well built. Its streets are spacious, and, as it spreads over a considerable extent of ground, the houses, even in the middle of it, are generally furnished with good outlets and gardens; which contribute much to the pleasantness and salubrity of the town, as well as to the convenience of its inhabitants. It is a mile long

from east to west, and its streets have a gradual descent to the river. It stands in a fertile and extensive vale, and is called by Camden one of the *eyes* of the county. The country all around it is beautified with green meadows, abounds in delightful orchards and gardens, is enriched with wood, and peopled with numerous villagers : so as to exhibit to the eye of the spectator, who approaches the town, a charming scene. 'The county itself, though in the winter moist and marshy,' is supposed by some to derive its name from the summer-like temperature of the air.\* The part of it in which Taunton is situated, has, if not an exclusive, yet a peculiar claim to the excellent qualities which are ascribed to the whole. On account of its fertility the peasantry used to boast that it was so fruitful with the *sun* and *soil* alone as to need no manuring. This country is called by the inhabitants

\* It is now thirty years since this was written, and in that period the drainage of the county has been considerably improved, numerous inclosures have taken place, and cultivation greatly extended.

<sup>a</sup> In a piece of Fuller's, where all the counties are personified, a contest for the crown arises between London and York. England, after great altercation, is introduced in the character of a grave matron, to restore the crown, which had been placed on York, to London. She also advises the shires not to fall out : " Which," she is represented as saying, " were so many several rooms of that house, whereof the king was the housekeeper—Conceive Cornwall for the porch, Devonshire for the hall, Somersetshire for the summer parlour, Cambridgeshire for the chapel, Northamptonshire for the long gallery, Rutlandshire for the closet, Middlesex for the lodging chambers, Lincolnshire for the kitchen, Yorkshire for the stable, Cheshire for the cheese chamber, Northumberland for the coal-house, &c."—*Collectanea Curiosa*, vol. i. p. 225, 226. T.

*Taunton Dean*,<sup>1</sup> that is the *Vale of Taunton*; and from their high conceit of its pre-eminence above other countries, hath arisen a boastful proverb, “*Where should I be born else but in Taunton Dean?*” as if it were a disparagement to be born in any other place; and none in England, nay in the whole world, were to be compared with it.

#### DR. AMORY'S POEM DESCRIPTIVE OF TAUNTON.

Dr. Thomas Amory, a native of this town, published in 1724, the following poem, descriptive of its situation and advantages which may be fitly introduced here.

Hail! native town with cheerful plenty bless'd,  
Of numerous hands and thriving trade possess'd:  
Whose poor might live from biting want secure,  
Did not resistless aile their hearts allure,

<sup>1</sup> From the Saxon word *den*, which is added to the names of places, to signify their being situated in valleys or woods; for the word *den* in that language, means both a valley and a woody place. *Sax. Chror. Regulæ Generales*, p. 5. T.

*Taunton Dean* may thus be understood to mean *The town on the river Tone, in a woody valley*—See note 1, page 1.

We have frequent examples of the word *den*, or *dean*, being applied to forests or woody situations—as the forest of *Dean* in Gloucestershire,—the forest of *Arden* (the hill forest) in Warwickshire,—*Den*, the woody retreat of wild beasts.

“The ancient Brittaines,” saith Speed, “attribute the name of *Arden* to forests and woods, but Giraldus Cambrensis gives it the name of *Danutia*, or *Danica Sylva*, or the Danes’ woods, who did lurk and shelter themselves in these shady places. But long before the time of the Danes, these woods were possessed by the *Silures*, a fierce and warlike people, which over-run Monmouthshire and Herefordshire.” *Bigland’s Gloucestershire*, vol. i. p. 458, from *Parsons’s MSS.*

Round thee, in spring, we view with ravish'd eyes, }  
 Italian scenes in English ground arise ;  
 Which, crown'd with freedom, rival Paradise.  
 Th' enamell'd meads with vast profusion show  
 The various colours of the heavenly bow.  
 The fatt'ning Tove in slow meanders moves  
 Loath to forsake the happy land it loves :  
 Forc'd to the main, by nature's law, it bears  
 Back floating vessels fraught with richest wares ;  
 And diff'ring products from earth's diff'ring shores,  
 Gather'd by commerce, lavish, on us pours.  
 Upon its borders herds unnumber'd graze  
 With sheep whose fleeces Persian silks surpass ;  
 Nor prowling wolves, nor hungry lions fear,  
 Which other flocks, in other pastures, tear.  
 Tall bushy trees, o'er all the region found,  
 With cooling shades refresh the fertile ground ;  
 Beneath whose coverts beautiful females stray,  
 Fresh, artless, gentle, innocently gay, }  
 And pass, with flatt'ring swains, the sportful hours away.  
 Sighing they listen to the am'rous tale,  
 Nor fear lest wily snakes their steps assail.  
 Gay painted blossoms smile on lower trees,  
 With promis'd nectar thirsty palates please, }  
 And with their sweets perfume the vernal breeze.  
 While warbling birds melodious notes employ,  
 At once exalt, and tell, the shepherd's joy.  
 Here fruitful hillocks swell amidst the plain,  
 In verdure clad, and rich in future grain ;  
 Adown whose sides the murm'ring torrents roll,  
 And charm the muse to bless the poet's soul,  
 And, all around, proud, guardian hills ascend,  
 Whose height from winds inclement well defend ;  
 Whose bowels unknown stores of minerals hold,  
 Which poverty disarm, and chase th' invading cold.  
 But I, unequal, tempt the arduous toil :  
 Large as thy vales, and generous as thy soil,  
 The verse should be, which would thy praise proclaim,  
 In numbers worthy of the matchless theme.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These lines were originally published in Brice's Exeter paper. T.

## VALE OF TAUNTON-DEAN.

'The Vale of Taunton-Dean comprehends the following parishes, namely, Taunton, Wilton, Trull, Pitminster, Angers-Leigh, Corfe, Orchard-Portman, Stoke-Saint-Mary, Ruishton, Thorn-Falcon, Bishop's Hull, Bradford, West-Buckland, Ninehead, Wellington, Sampford-Arundel, Hill-Farrance, Oake, Staple-grove, Norton-Fitzwarine, Cheddon-Fitzpaine, West-Monkton, Kingston, Cotheleston, Bishop's-Lydeard, Heathfield, Halse, Ash-Prior's, Fitzhead, Milverton, Langford-Budville, Thorn-Saint-Margaret, Bathealton, and Runnington.

The Vale is bounded on the north by the Quantock-hills ; on the west by Brindon-hill ; and on the south by the Blackdown-hills. Towards the east and north-east, it has no mountainous boundary, until it reaches the Polden-hills, a distance of twenty miles from Taunton.

The climate of the Vale of Taunton-Dean is peculiarly mild and serene ; and the soil highly fertile and productive. The eye is agreeably relieved by a judicious mixture of arable and pasture : and if it be contrasted with the north and north-western parts of the county, it may emphatically be called the "Land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey."<sup>1</sup>

The soil is a rich loam, interspersed in some places with clay, as part of Bradford, Buckland, the north

<sup>1</sup> About half a mile to the south-west of Taunton, on the road to Trull, there is a small hill, which commands a fine view of this Vale. This hill is called "*Mount Nebo*," in allusion to that mount from which Moses, as is mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, was allowed to take a view of "the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey."

side of Wellington, part of Sampford, Hill-Farrance, Ninehead, Oake, and Heathfield ; and in other parts with sand, or a lighter mould, as Kingston, Bishop's-Lydeard, Halse, Fitzhead, Milverton, Langford, Thorn-Saint-Margaret, and Runnington.

The hundreds in which these villages are situate, together with that of North-Curry, are principally held under the churches of Winchester and Wells, and the lands are chiefly possessed by small proprietors.

The dry uplands are devoted to tillage, and the rich lowlands to grazing, or the dairy. On the former, wheat, beans, peas, and vetches are the principal crops. There is a considerable proportion of land in this vale capable of improvement by watering, some of which is so managed ; but the water being frequently scarce, the water-courses are a perpetual source of litigation.

In no county are the farmers more attentive to the mode of sowing wheat, or laying up their lands in such form as to secure them from injury by Winter rains ; and the quality of the grain is such, as to induce the farmers of Sussex, Hants, and Berks, to purchase it for seed at Weyhill fair, at a high price.

The vale does not abound with oak, but *elm* grows in the hedges to a size sufficiently large for the keels of ships of war. For the most part they grow from the inchors or suckers of the neighbouring trees ; probably some from seed. Few are planted from nurseries, nor is there often any occasion for it, elm being the spontaneous production of the country.

The orchards of this rich and delightful vale, from which cider is made in the highest perfection, must not

be passed by unnoticed. There are many gentlemen in the neighbourhood of Taunton, who sell their best cider for eight, ten, and twelve pounds per hogshead; and it is supposed they possess an art, peculiar to themselves, of conducting the fermentation, and thereby preserving a rich, and delicious flavour. The best fruit delights in a strong clayey soil. Unless great attention be observed in making, the labour is in vain; for cider requires much greater nicety of management, than malt liquors. The apples are suffered to fall off the trees, or when thoroughly ripe are picked with great care. They are put in heaps to ferment, and remain in that state for three or four weeks; after they are ground and the liquor is expressed, it is suffered to remain in tubs, from thirty to forty hours, when a scum, or froth, will rise on the top; this they narrowly watch, and when it breaks, they rack for the first time into vessels; after which unremitting attention is necessary to prevent *excessive fermentation* by early and frequent rackings.<sup>1</sup>

#### TAUNTON PROBABLY KNOWN TO THE ROMANS.

The curiosity of the human mind, in its attempts to trace back the history of places to their origin,

<sup>1</sup> Billingsley's View of the Agriculture of the County of Somerset.

It may here be not unnecessary to caution farmers possessing orchards, not to fall in with the usual custom of beating down the apples with sticks. Early in the autumn the buds for the succeeding year are formed, and being tender, are soon destroyed. To this violent attack on the branches, may in a great degree be attributed the incapacity of trees to bear fruit two years following.



for want of records, is often baffled and mortified. The memorials of ancient times are either lost,<sup>1</sup> or are not sufficiently minute. As to Taunton, there is reason to suppose, it was not unknown to the Romans; for in the year 1666, two large urns, full of Roman coins, in weight about eighty pounds each, were dug up by labourers, with mattocks, in ploughed fields, the one at Lawrence-Lydeard, and the other within the parish of Stogumber, or Stoke Gomer, adjoining it. This discovery has been supposed to authorise the following conclusions: that, after the conquest of other parts of Britain, the Romans came to the *Cangi*, in Somerset; that having conquered them in a valley between Taunton and Withyel, at or near the place now called Conquest, they maintained a legion, or part of one at least, hereabouts, for the purpose of preventing insurrections, which they paid with such money as was found in the abovementioned urns, and that these forces, when called home to relieve the empire, distressed by the irruptions of the northern nations, buried these treasures, which, the antiquary,

<sup>1</sup> Before the invention of the art of printing through the ignorance of the times, and the difficulty of multiplying copies, few books were published, and of those which were published the circulation was very limited. It gives a striking proof of the great scarcity of books, that in 1424, the Countess of Westmoreland presented a petition to the privy council, representing that the late king, Henry V. had borrowed a book from her, and praying, that an order might be given, under the privy seal, for the restoration of the said book, which was granted with great solemnity.—*Rymer, quoted by Hall, in his Characters of the Kings and Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 48. T.*

who makes these remarks, calls "Claudius Cæsar's," and "the old Roman emperor's treasure, found near Conquest."<sup>1</sup>

These coins were of the emperors Claudius, Nero, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, Antoninus, Septimius Severus, Tacitus, Gallienus, Tetricus, and many other. From these discoveries, the different ages of the coins, the immenseness of their quantity, and particularly the name of the place, *Conquest*, near which they were found; a writer,<sup>2</sup> whose researches are rather more curious than critical, has in a long treatise endeavoured to prove that in some place in the valley which extends from the west side of Quantock, from Taunton to Lydeard, Stogumber, and Watchet, the Romans completed the *conquest* of so much of Britain as is now called England; and that through many ages afterwards they continued a legion, or part of one, in this neighbourhood.

The *Cangi* of Somersetshire were a posthumous tribe of the continental Belgæ who last emigrated into Britain, under Divitiacus, king of the Suessiones, who was, according to Cæsar, the most powerful prince in Gaul. Divitiacus, who was the sovereign, met

<sup>1</sup> Mag. Brit. et Hib. 4to, Somerset, 1730, p. 810, 811.—Collinson's Hist. of Somerset, vol ii. p. 493.

<sup>2</sup> See the discourse printed by Hearne, (who ascribes it to Gibbons) in Peter Langtoft's Chronicle, p. 441.

Although the immediate district round Taunton is not included in the Itinerary of Antoninus, yet there is no doubt of the importance which the Roman generals attached to it after the conquest of the *Cangi*. The discourse here ascribed to Gibbons is entitled to more consideration than Mr. Collinson was disposed to give it. His account is plausible, and it is confirmed by local appearances and accidental discoveries that have since been made. E.

only of the continental, but also of the island, Belgæ, brought over with him a considerable army, who assisted their countrymen, already settled in the southern and western parts of the island, in extending the line of their possessions. Upon the arrival of this prince the boundaries of the Belgic Britons were exactly defined; this was effected by throwing up a large and deep fosse or ditch, called from the circumstance of its division, *Wunsdike*, which to this day exists in many places in perfect preservation, and is one of the greatest curiosities of British antiquity.

The possessions of the Belgæ before the coming of Divitiacus, in all probability extended over Kent, and a small part of Middlesex, over Sussex and the greater part of Hampshire and Wiltshire, over Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and a part of Cornwall. On his arrival with his auxiliary forces, he subdued the rest of Middlesex and all Essex, all Surrey, the rest of Hampshire, and the adjoining parts of Berkshire, the rest of Wiltshire, the remainder of Cornwall, all Somersetshire, and the south-west of Gloucestershire.

The Belgic colonies in Britain were only five, namely, the *Cantii* of Kent, the *Regni* of Sussex, the proper *Belgæ* of Hampshire and Wiltshire, the *Durotriges* of Dorsetshire, and the *Damnonii* of Devonshire. The new colony, planted by Divitiacus in Middlesex and Essex, went under the name of *Trinovantes*.—*Whitaker's Hist. of the Britons*, p. 63, 65.

In the year of Christ, 49, two trophies are said to have been erected by the Romans to commemorate the final defeat of the *Cangi*, who, as we learn from Tacitus, were subdued by Ostorius, Proprætor in Britain, under the emperor Claudius. In the time of Henry VIII. a large oblong plate of lead was ploughed up in the hamlet of Wookey Hole, which had on it this inscription:—

TI. CLAUDIUS. CAE

SAR. AUG. P. M.

TRIB. P. VIII. IMP.

XVI. DE. BRITAN.

This plate was supposed to have belonged to one of those trophies, and affords a proof that if the Belgic fugitives were not finally exterminated in these parts, yet at least the place in question was known to the Romans.

Some antiquaries have been led to imagine that the *Cangi*, were

seated in the neighbourhood of Cannington. Other writers have, however, placed them in different quarters of the island.

Bishop Tanner places the *Cangi* in the northern part of Wiltshire, and supports his opinion by the coincidence of the name of that people, with the first syllable in the names of certain towns and villages, as Calne, Cannings, &c.

In the Triads of the ancient Bards, the *Cangi* are mentioned as a class of men selected from the principal tribes, or nations, and deputed to keep their flocks, and attend their cattle. Their herds generally consisted of twenty thousand, and were attended by three hundred of these keepers, or *Cangi*—*Britton's Wiltshire*, vol. i. p. 3.

The *Cangi*, according to the learned Baxter, were a set of people belonging to every tribe or nation of the Britons; they attended the herds, and resided with them in different grazing grounds at different seasons of the year. The *Cornavii* had their *Cangi* who wintered in *Wiral*, and took their summer residence in *Tegangle*, now a part of Flintshire. The *Orilovices* had also their *Cangi*.—*Pennant's Tours in Wales*, vol. i. p. 7.

Mr. Pennant (*ibid.* p. 81.) supposes that the *Cangi*, during their long vacant time, might sometimes engage in mining concerns. This supposition is founded on several pigs of lead having been found near Halton, in Cheshire, some of which were inscribed *Imp. Domit. Aug. C. de Ceang*. These have been thought to commemorate a victory gained by the Romans over the *Cangi*; but it is evident, says Mr. P. that they were nothing more than pigs of lead brought there for use, or exportation, and he is further satisfied, that the ore which produced this lead was dug and smelted, either in that part of Flintshire, anciently called *Tegangle*, or the summer residence of the *Cangi*, or *Ceangi*; or from the residence of the same order of people in Derbyshire.

The Roman general Ostorius subdued the *Iceni* and *Cangi*, a people of this part of Somersetshire, about the year of our Lord 80, and built a regular chain of forts upon the banks of the Severn and Avon. Many of his *Castra Æstiva*, or *Exploratoria*, are still plainly discernible. A notification of Ostorius's presence in the west of England is met with in the name of *Aust* passage, called in *Domesday Book*, *Osterclive*, an evident corruption of the Roman appellation Ostorius.—*Warner's Illustration of Roman Antiquities discovered at Bath*, p. v.

‘The common tradition, however, is, that **CONQUEST** had its name from a signal victory obtained over the Danes at that place, by the Saxons under the command of king Alfred, which might have been the case, although the other likewise should be strictly true. Certain it is, that king Alfred at that period possessed all the lands of Lydeard, and when he emerged from the troubles in which the Danes had involved him, and began to advert to the concerns of domestic life, he gave the manor of Lydeard, now called Bishop’s Lydeard, with those of Wellington and West Buckland, to **ASSER**, the preceptor of his children, as a reward for that prelate’s care and attention bestowed upon them in their education.’

These observations are confirmed by the discovery of Roman coins, and divers other antiquities, in the foundations of an old house near the castle, 1643,<sup>a</sup> and by a like incident within the memory of man; when on pulling down a house in St. James’s parish, an old Roman coin was found. It was of the size of a farthing, with the head of Vespasian; the legend **VESP. AUG. IMP.** The reverse, a female captive, her hands bound behind her to a palm tree; the legend **IUDAEA CAPTA**,<sup>a</sup> and in the exergue **S. C.**<sup>1</sup>

‘In July 1748, there was ploughed up in a field at Lilledon, in the parish of North-Curry, an urn, in which were several Roman silver coins, namely, of Julian, Constantine, Constans, Valentinian, Valens,

<sup>a</sup> Communicated by the Rev. J. Collinson. T.

<sup>a</sup> Communicated by Mr. Thomas Peacock. T.

<sup>1</sup> See an illustration of this reverse, by Addison, in his “Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals,” Series 3. Fig. 13. T.

Gratian, Valentinian junior, Theodosius, Magnus Maximus, Eugenius, Arcadius, Honorius, and many others. They were in the most perfect condition, and as fresh as if they had been lately coined. They were all of the same size, excepting one of Gratian's, with this inscription, D. N. GRATIANUS. P. F. AUG.<sup>1</sup> and on the reverse a figure standing, with one foot on a globe, and a shield in his hand, inscribed VOT. V. MULT. X. and round the edge VICTORIA AUGUSTORUM, and in the exergue S. P. Q. R. This piece was three times as large as any of the other, and weighed nearly as much as a shilling.

<sup>1</sup> *That is, Dominus Noster Gratianus, Pius, Felix, Augustus. Vota Quinquennalia Multiplicata Decennalia, Senatus Populusque Romanus. Victoria Augustorum.—In English, "Our Lord Gratian, pious, happy, august; the senate and people of Rome wish, that, having reigned five years, he may reign double that number. The victory of the Augusti."*

There appears to have been a medal struck at the same time by Theodosius, the colleague of Gratian, with the inscription "Victoria Augustorum."

It would seem that this medal had been struck about A. D. 379, on the defeat of the Goths by Theodosius.

Pinkerton, (*Essay on Medals*, vol. i. p. 268.) has the following observation on this inscription:—"A remarkable circumstance in Roman medals, is the inscription VOT. V., MULT. X., to be found upon many reverses, and most commonly marked on a shield, or within a crown of laurel. This, Du Cange interprets to refer to the artifice of Augustus, who pretended to lay down his power, and resume it for ten years longer as at the request of the senate. This term was, says he, by succeeding emperors shortened to five; and solemn vows were entered into by their subjects for their safety to the end of that period; nay, that double that period might be allotted to their reign, again to be prolonged, in the wishes of their people, to a future date."

There were about one hundred and fifty of the smaller pieces, the greater part of which came into the possession of the Rev. Mr. Woodforde, vicar of North Curry.''

' There is an objection which may be urged against the occupation of Taunton, or any part of the vale, by the Romans. This is its low situation. Besides, there is no evidence whatever that Taunton was a Roman town. It is well known that the Roman camps occupied the commanding summits of the country, and this is strongly exemplified by the remains of several Roman camps, still existing in the county of Somerset, namely, Brent-knoll, Douseborough-castle on the Quantock-hills, Castle Neroche on the Blackdown-hills, Blacker's-hill in Chilcompton, Bow Ditch in Chew-magna, Burwalls and Stoke-Leigh in Long-Ashton, Cadbury or Camalet-castle, Masbury-castle in Ashwick, Hamden-hill in Montacute, and Worlebury Camp in Weston-super-Mare. All these, not to mention several others, are instances of encampments, occupying high and commanding situations. It must, however, be acknowledged that one of the principal Roman stations in this county, that of Ilchester, is an exception to the rule here mentioned, for that encampment stands comparatively in a low situation; but this is accounted for, when it is recollected that Ilchester had been one of the principal towns of the Belgic Britons, previously to

<sup>1</sup> Gent. Mag. Sept. 1748, p. 405.

Several of these coins, which are in the highest state of preservation, are now in the possession of Thomas Woodforde, Esq. of Taunton, son of the late Rev. Mr. Woodforde, of North-Curry.

the Roman invasion ; and this is the reason why the Romans occupied the present Ilchester as a summer camp, whilst their regular and permanent station was upon Hamden-hill, within view of Ilchester.'

' In Collinson's *History of the County of Somerset*, vol. 1. p. xxiii. it is said that a Roman road ran, nearly parallel with the Fosse, from the Forest of Exmoor through TAUNTON, Bridgwater, and Axbridge, to Portishead, on the Bristol Channel, where it intersected Wansdike, and whence there was a *trajectus* to the city of *Isca Silurum*, now Caerleon, in the county of Monmouth.

' Admitting the statement of Collinson's, relating to this Roman road, to be correct, it adds strength to the conjecture that the old road from Taunton to Bathpool,' where it branches off from the present turnpike-road near the first mile-stone, is the remains of the Roman *stratum*.'

#### TAUNTON IN THE TIME OF THE SAXONS.

But in whatever obscurity this early period of the History of Taunton is involved, it clearly appears to

' The name of ' Bathpool' would indicate that village to have been a British town. It appears to be derived from *Bod-pwell*, *Bod* in the British, from the Hebrew *Beth*, signifying a house or dwelling, whence our present word *booth* ; and *pwell*, British, a current of water kept together and fed by springs. Minshew derives *pool* from the Greek word *pulos*, mud.

The hill at Bathpool, called Creechbury-Hill, has every appearance of being artificial. It was, without doubt, a British earth-work, or hill of communication.



have been a place of great note in the time of the Saxons, to which people it certainly owes its foundation. For Ina, one of the West-Saxon kings,<sup>1</sup> as early as the year 700, built a castle here, nearly upon the site of the present castle, 'not only as a place of residence, but also for the purpose of better securing the conquests which he had made in this part of Britain, and awing those disaffected nobles who fixed a jealous eye on his dominions. It was here that that prince, whose reign throughout is marked with fortitude tempered with moderation, and prudence heightened by religion,' is said to have held the first great council of his kingdom, by whose assistance, he compiled a code of laws for the government of his subjects.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ina succeeded Ceadwalla in Wessex. He was the son of Cenred, who was the nephew of Cynegils. His father was living at the period of his accession.

<sup>2</sup> Wilkins's *Leges Saxonice*, p. 14—27.

When he established his laws, he saith: "I Ina, king of the West-Saxons, have called my fatherhood, aldermen, and my wisest commons, with the godly men of my kingdom, to consult of great and weighty matters."—Here is represented, in king *Ina*, the king's royal person; his fatherhood, in those ancient days, were those whom we call bishops, and therefore were termed reverend fathers; by aldermen, the nobility is meant; so honourable was the word aldermen of old times, that only noblemen were called aldermen. By the wisest commons is signified knights and burgesses; and so is the king's writ at this day, "*De discretioribus et magis sufficientibus.*" By godly men is meant the convocation house; for that it only consisteth of religious men, to consult of great and weighty matters; so is the king's writ at this day; "*Pro quibusdam arduis et urgentibus negotiis, nos, statum et defensionem regni nostri Angliæ, et ecclesiæ Anglicanæ concernentibus.*"—*Doddridge on the Antiquity of Parliaments in Hoarne's Collection of Curious Discourses*, vol. i, p. 281. T.

‘Much of the fame of Ina has been gained by his legislation, and he deserves the gratitude of mankind in common with every other lawgiver. Whoever applies himself to mark the useful limits of human action, to set boundaries to individual selfishness, to establish the provisions of justice in defence of the weak or injured, and to rescue the criminal from punishments inflicted capriciously, is a character entitled to the veneration of mankind. Laws must partake of the ignorance and spirit of the age which gave them birth. An Ina must legislate for the people of an Ina. If the subsequent improvements of mankind discover that prior regulations have been defective, succeeding legislators will correct those provisions, which the progress of society has made obsolete or improper.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Turner's Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 396.

The laws of king Ina were made by the advice of Cenred his father, Edda and Erkenwald his bishops, his aldermen, and other *Witas* in council assembled.

In his first law, the enforcing word is in the plural number, *Præcipimus*, that is, we, the king and members of the *Witenagemote*, command the following laws to be observed. From these words it seems the nobles had not only a share with the king in making the laws, but also the enforcing and putting of them into execution.

Ina was one of those kings of the Heptarchy that Ethelwerd (in his Chronicle published by Sir Henry Savile, among the Five Historians after Bede) called *Anglorum Rex primus*, to whose laws the rest of the kings of the Heptarchy agreed, and received them into their dominions, and were in some measure parties to them; for when matters of national concern were to be debated in the council of that king to whom was conceded the pre-eminence, the other kings sent some of their principal men to be present there, to debate and consent, and to bring the laws there made into the

The second of Ina's laws prescribed a penalty for deferring the baptism of infants beyond thirty days, and a much greater when they died unbaptised.<sup>1</sup> One of them appears to have been dictated by humanity, and to have been intended as a mild and equitable provision for the ease and comfort of slaves,<sup>2</sup> that

kingdoms from whence they were sent.—*Gurdon's Hist. of Parliament*, vol. i. p. 27.

Alfred was the first king who made a code of laws which was common to the whole kingdom. There were very few legislators among the Saxon monarchs. The laws of Ethelbert, who died in 617, are the most ancient that we have. The next are those of Lothaire, 673; Edric, 684; and Wightred, 694; all of them kings of Kent. Ina, king of the West-Saxons, as mentioned in the text, and Offa, king of Mercia, 757, were the only other kings of the Heptarchy who formed any laws, which have been preserved by historians. If it be objected, that the people of the other kingdoms could not live without laws suited to the situation of their affairs, it may be observed that the monarchs of those kingdoms received into their states and adopted the laws of the kings already mentioned. The laws of Ina were received by the other kings of the Heptarchy, and in one of the great councils held by Offa, king of Mercia, there were present the king of the East-Saxons, the king of the West-Saxons, the king of Kent, the king of Northumberland, and three kings of Wales.—*Gurdon's Hist. of Parliament*, vol. 1. p. 27.—*Spelm. Con.* 309. 313.

<sup>1</sup> Inett's *Hist. of the English Church*, vol. i. p. 287. T.

<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-Saxons not only kept great numbers of individuals in a state of slavery, but they were also dealers in slaves, and carried on that inhuman traffic on a large scale. The Northumbrians in particular were famous for their exportation of slaves, and this trade continued amongst them, according to William of Malmesbury (*Script. post Bedam*, p. 17.) for some time after the conquest.

The people of Bristol were also very much employed in the slave trade, which they pursued with such eagerness, that they

they might not be worn out by unceasing labour ; for it is ordained, that if a servant, by his master's command, should work on Sunday, he should be made free.

frequently spared not their nearest relations. The description of the slave-market, as given in the life of St. Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, (*Anglia Sacra*, vol. ii. p. 258.) who filled that see at the time of the conquest, and died in 1095, is an exact picture of the negro commerce as lately carried on in the West Indies :—

“ There is a town called Brichstou (Bristol) opposite to Ireland, and extremely convenient for trading with that country. Wulfstan induced them to drop a barbarous custom, which neither the love of God nor the king could prevail on them to lay aside. This was the mart for slaves, collected from all parts of England, and particularly young women whom they took care to put into such a state as to enhance their value. It was a most moving sight to see in the public markets, rows of young people, of both sexes, tied together with ropes ; of great beauty, and in the flower of their youth, daily prostituted, daily sold. Execrable fact ! wretched disgrace ! men unmindful even of the affections of the brute creation ! delivering into slavery their relations, and even their very offspring.”

Chester, it appears, was one of the places, from which slaves were exported in the time of the Saxons. Its vicinity to Wales, and the frequent wars carried on with the Welsh, furnished them with a constant supply, but if that were wanting, their neighbours of the Northumbrian kingdom were ready to dispose of their nearest relations.—*Pennant's Tours in Wales*, vol i. p. 174.

There seems to have been a mart for slaves at Lewes in Sussex, for in Domesday Book it is said that in that borough, four-pence was to be paid to the portreeve for every man sold there.

This unhappy race of men seems to have been longer perpetuated on the estates of the monasteries than elsewhere, for the monks were forbidden by an ancient canon to manumit their slaves. In the survey of Glastonbury Abbey, taken after the dissolution there is mention of “ two hundred and seventy-one bondmen, whose bodies and goods were at the king's highness's pleasure.”

‘Notwithstanding the insurrection of Ealdbryht Clito, who urged a presumptive claim to the crown of the West-Saxons,’ and whom Ina vanquished under the walls of his castle, and the seditious murmurs of some other malecontents of inferior note, he lived to see his territories in the full possession of tranquillity ; and there being now no longer an occasion for walls and bulwarks,’ the castle which he had erected in Taunton, was destroyed<sup>a</sup> about the year 721 ; and

<sup>a</sup> The insurrection of pretenders disturbed the close of Ina’s reign ; but he attacked and destroyed Cynewulf Etheling ; and in the next year his queen besieged another, Ealdbryht, in Taunton, a castle which the king had built to defend that part of his dominions, and in which the rebel had taken his post. She levelled it to the ground, and Ealdbryht withdrew into Sussex. Ina directed his forces against this province, and three years afterwards slew his competitor.—*Sax. Chron.* 52.—*Hunt.* 338.—*Flor. Wig.* 268.—*Turner’s Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 401.

<sup>a</sup> It is probable that this castle was constructed of timber, as was customary with several ancient nations, and even with others of later date. The Persians on the approach of the Spartans, secured themselves within their wooden walls ; and Cæsar found great resistance from a tower in the Alpine castle of Larignum, made of the timber of the larch, which was found to be incombustible. In later times the castle of Bamburgh in Northumberland, was built originally by Ida with wood ; and the burgh of Murray was fortified by the Danes with the same material. The people of the same county, in 1228, had castles of wood ; and a century after these more recent instances, William de Melton, archbishop of York, in 1317, fortified the mount in that city, called *Old Bale*, with beams eighteen inches thick.—Whenever we find an ancient fortress totally vanished, and cannot account for the disposal of the materials in the erection of any neighbouring buildings, we must suppose that they had been constructed of wood ; and that they had been destroyed by fire, either sung into them by means of torches,

the king having put the government of his kingdom into the hands of Ethelard, brother of his queen Ethelburga, retired to a monastery at Rome, and there ended his days.<sup>1</sup> A new castle was built by one of the bishops of Winchester, about the time of the conquest, and it was afterwards considerably improved as well as repaired by other bishops.<sup>2</sup>

With Ina originated the tribute called Peter's Pence. It was ordained by a general decree, that in every family, possessed of any kind of goods to the value of twenty pence, throughout all the kingdom of the West-Saxons, one penny should be yearly collected at Lammas, and sent over to the blessed St. Peter

or by *vella*, or vast masses of combustibles rolled against them by the force of numbers, as was the practice of the ancient Scandinavians, described by Olaus Magnus.—It is in this manner we must account for the total disappearance of many castles in Wales, whose names are preserved in history, but whose vestiges are now sought for in vain.—*Pennant's Tours in Wales*, vol. ii. p. 14.

In a letter from Sir Benjamin Hammet to Dr. Toulmin he says "The arch that I have lately altered into a room was built above twelve hundred years since, by Ina, king of the West-Saxons for his mistress—whose queen, after his death, destroyed part of the castle to be revenged on that lady. How soon after it was rebuilt and fortified so as to be called the western key of the kingdom I do not find."

<sup>1</sup> Collinson's *Hist. of Somerset*, vol. iii. p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> The *Saxon Chronicle*, Anno 1001, informs us that the Danes in one of their predatory incursions burnt *Tegntun*, with many other good towns. This name has been appropriated to *Taunton* by Lambard, the Kentish antiquary, in his *Dictionarium Angliæ Topog. et Hist.* p. 368, but Gibson, in *Nominum Locorum explicatio*, at the end of his edition of the *Saxon Chronicle*, supposes with greater probability, one of the *Teightons* in the county of Devon, to have been the scene of this dreadful calamity. H.

and the church of Rome, which in the Anglo-Saxon was called Rome-scot. It was first paid under the notion of the king's alms;<sup>1</sup> but was afterwards required under the name of Peter's Pence.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speed's Succession of English Monarchs, p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> The original application and design of this tribute, according to Matthew of Westminster, was the support of the English, who might repair to Rome, to be instructed in literature and the catholic faith, in the English school which Ina built there. To accommodate them he also erected a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, in which they might celebrate divine service, and if they should happen to die at Rome, be interred.—*Weever's Funeral Mon.* p. 173.

The piety and munificence of Ina, in the style of that age, were displayed in various institutions in England. In 704, he built a monastery at Wells. In 708, he rebuilt Glastonbury abbey, and exchanged the black monks for benedictines. He afterwards erected a monastery at Muchelney, in Somersetshire, and an abbey at Abingdon in Berkshire. After a reign of thirty-seven or thirty-eight years, he resigned his throne to his kinsman Ethelard, and travelled, on pilgrimage to Rome, where he died in 728. He is said to have taken this step at the persuasion of his queen Ethelburga, who had long urged him to it, without effect, till she hit upon the following expedient. When, on a certain time, he had lodged at a manor in the country, with all regal splendour, and had been entertained with all the luxury the age afforded; on his departure, she directed the keeper of the royal seat to remove all the rich furniture, bedding, and hangings of the palace, to fill the rooms and all the offices with straw, ordure, and filth, and to lay a sow with pigs in the royal chamber. When every thing was thus prepared to excite disgust, where before he had lodged with pleasure, she feigned urgent reasons to induce the king to visit it again. On his return to it, and perceiving the loathsome appearance it wore, she took occasion to direct his thoughts "to the consideration of the vain pleasures of this world, which in a moment come to nought; together with the corruption of the flesh, being a filthy lump of clay, after it should once be dissolved in death." The historian tells us,

MANOR OF TAUNTON-DEAN ANNEXED TO THE  
SEE OF WINCHESTER.

'Ethelard, succeeding to the throne of the West-Saxons, seems to have followed the steps of his great predecessor, and to have cultivated peace, piety, and religion, in which he was assisted by his devout queen Fritheswitha, who, abandoning all her splendid possessions, devoted herself entirely to GOD, and, among many other acts of religious charity, prevailed upon Ethelard to bestow the town of Taunton, then the seat of royal residence, on the church of Winchester, which had been founded by Cynegils, the first christian king of the West-Saxons.' 'To this donation, which was made somewhat above three hundred years before the arrival of William the Conqueror, was appended in that space such a remarkable share of immunities, prerogatives, and privileges, as is hardly to be found in the description of any other manor in the Norman survey.'

Dugdale, in the *Monasticon*,<sup>2</sup> says, that in the year that her persuasions, enforced by the scene before him, took effect. He renounced the world, and his queen herself became a nun in the abbey of Barking, where she was made abbess, and died.—*Holinshead's Chronicle*, vol. i. *History*, p. 127, 128.—*Turner's Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 402. T.

<sup>1</sup> Collinson's *Hist. of Somerset*, vol. iii. p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> Anno 721. Ethelardus Rex West-Saxiæ. Hujus conjunx Fritheswitha Regina dedit Wintoniensi Ecclesiæ *Tantonam* de suo patrimonio.—Et ipse Ethelardus de sua parte addidit ad prædictum manerium, ad opus ejusdem Ecclesiæ vii. Mansas.—*Mon. Angl.* vol. i. p. 32.

Fritheswitha Regina, mater sanctæ Frethelwithæ Virginis, dedit Ecclesiæ Winton. Manerium de *Tantone*, in qua requiescit humata.—*Ibid.* p. 980.



721, Ethelard's queen gave, out of her patrimony, the manor of Taunton to the church of Winchester, where she was buried; to which Ethelard himself added seven manses, or dwellings for peasants.<sup>1</sup>

It is, however, asserted by other historians, that the manor of Taunton, was a grant of queen Emma's, who, when a widow, was accused by Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, to king Edward the Confessor, her son, of incontinency with Alfwin, bishop of Winchester. Upon this charge the bishop was imprisoned, and the royal lady treated with rigour. To exculpate her character, she offered blindfolded and barefooted, to pass over nine red-hot ploughshares, placed at unequal distances. This mode of trial, called the Fiery Ordeal, was generally adopted in those times; and in this case, the appeal was considered as made to the providence of GOD, who, it was supposed, would miraculously support the innocent. The issue of the experiment, it is said, evinced the innocence of queen Emma, who passed over them unhurt; and to express her gratitude to heaven, and to perpetuate the remembrance of her vindicated character, gave the manor of Taunton-Dean, and eight other valuable manors to the bishop of Winchester and his successors.<sup>2</sup> But Dr. Richardson, the learned editor of Godwin, treats this story concerning Emma, as a monkish fable; because the best and most careful historians near those times, Roger Hoveden, William

<sup>1</sup> So is the word *mansas* explained in Dugdale's Mon. Angl. 1718, p. 11—and in Kelham's Domesday Book illustrated, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Locke's MS. and Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops.

of Malmesbury, Matthew of Westminster, and others, take no notice of this wonderful escape.\*

‘The names of the nine manors, which queen Emma bestowed upon the church of Winchester, are given in the note below, from Dugdale,† but Taunton is not mentioned in the number, so that it is more probable that queen Fritheswitha gave this manor to the see of Winchester.’

The religion of those times consisted very much in investing religious houses and characters with great estates. We survey the amazing grants of this kind with astonishment at the energy of superstition, which could thus engage the great proprietors of lands to strip themselves and their heirs of their patrimony; and we are not less astonished at the folly of the government, that could permit the monopolies of power and wealth, which sacred institutions thus obtained. It has been well observed, that notwithstanding these alienations of private fortunes, they were not wholly lost to the public, but sometimes did eventually prove beneficial to the community; and as they enabled their possessors to relieve and mitigate the public burdens, so they were at times improved to these purposes. The bishops of Winchester often advanced loans to the kings. William of Wykeham paid for his tenants, three several times, the subsidies granted to the king by parliament. Henry Beaufort

\* Richardson de Præsulibus Angliæ, p. 57.

† Emma mater Edwardi Confessoris, dedit novem Maneria Wintoniensi Ecclesiæ; Brandesbyri, Barchefelde, Howthtone, Fyde, Mechelmerche, Yvingeo, Wicombe, Weregrave, et Haylinge. —*Mon. Angl.* vol. i. p. 980.

the successor to William of Wykeham, who was called the rich cardinal, lent Henry V. greatly involved in debt by his continual wars, twenty thousand pounds.<sup>1</sup> There are also instances on record, of the lenity and liberality of rich ecclesiastics towards their tenants. William of Wykeham, at his first entrance upon the bishopric of Winchester, remitted to his poor tenants, certain acknowledgments, usually paid and due by custom, to the amount, says Godwin, of five hundred and twenty pounds, and according to Lowth, five hundred and two pounds, one shilling and seven-pence, of which there was remitted to Taunton and Rimpton one hundred and one pounds, twelve shillings and eight-pence. Duppa, one of his successors, remitted to his tenants, no less than thirty thousand pounds.<sup>2</sup> The enumeration of the sums expended, from the emoluments of the religious, in acts of munificence and charity, would furnish a large volume. Monasteries endowed, colleges founded, schools erected, churches built, perpetual alms to the poor, and exhibitions to students, are monuments of the liberality, with which the estates that had been, in one sense, alienated from the community, were given back again to the public, in the application of them to objects of general utility. It is amazing, what immense sums were thus expended. But the greatness of the expenditure proves the resources were also great.

<sup>1</sup> Lowth's *Life of William of Wykeham*, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> Granger's *Biogr. Hist. of England* 8vo, vol. iii. p. 194, 195.

TABLE, No. 1.

The table No. 1, was found by Mr. Locke among the records of the Manor of Taunton-Dean; that marked No. 2, has been compiled from more recent documents; both together will assist the reader in forming an idea of the value of this manor.

	Holway Hundred.	Hull Hundred.	Poundisford Hundred.	Nailbourne Hundred.	Staplegrove Hundred.	Total.
Rent of Assize,.....	£. s. d. 123 8 3½	£. s. d. 49 10 8½	£. s. d. 52 13 10½	£. s. d. 39 6 1	£. s. d. 62 6 1½	£. s. d. 327 15 10½
Customs, .....	4 2 5	2 5 4	4 5 9	2 8 8½	3 2 6	16 4 8½
New Rents, .....	3 6 0	0 6 8	18 2 4	0 1 1½	0 6 0	22 2 1½
Farm Rents, .....	1 8 0	4 11 10	.....	.....	.....	5 19 10
Sale of Works, .....	34 14 11½	23 0 9½	25 0 10½	14 18 6½	19 0 7½	116 15 9½
Heriots and Fines un- certain, .....	25 0 0	55 0 0	47 0 0	44 0 0	13 0 0	184 0 0
Increase of Rents, .....	.....	0 2 3	0 7 2	.....	.....	0 9 5
Issues of the Fairs, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 6 8	0 6 8
Otterford, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10 0 0
Rimpton, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10 0 0
						693 15 3½

TABLE, No. 2.

	Holway Hundred, 1816.	Hall Hundred. 1816.	Poundisford Hundred. 1816.	Nailsbourne Hundred. 1763.	Staplegrove Hundred. 1816.	Taunton Castle. 1816.	Taunton Borough. 1815.	Total.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Rent of Assize, .....	125 8 3½	49 10 8½	53 13 10½	39 6 1	62 6 11½	0 4 0	24 2 4	352 12 3
Customs, .....	4 3 5	2 5 4	4 5 9	2 8 8½	3 2 6	.....	5 10 2½	21 14 11
New Rents, .....	3 6 0	0 9 2	18 2 4	0 1 11½	0 6 8	1 14 8	0 6 0	24 7 9½
Farm Rents, .....	1 8 0	4 11 10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5 19 10
Sale of Works, .....	34 11 4½	23 0 9½	25 0 10½	14 8 6½	19 0 7½	.....	.....	116 2 2½
Heriots, .....	4 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0	31 0 0	11 0 0	.....	.....	56 0 0
Fines of Lands, .....	39 19 2	8 13 1	13 9 4	23 10 7	14 8 4	1 13 9	0 17 0	102 11 3
Increase of Works, .....	.....	0 2 3	0 7 2	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 9 5
Issues of the Fair, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 6 8	.....	0 6 8	0 13 4
Rents of Mills held of the Castle of Taunton, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	17 2 4	.....	17 2 4
Otterford, .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	8 3 6*
Rimpton, estimated .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	30 0 0
								735 16 10½

\* The heriots and fines have in some years exceeded £300, but these issues, depending upon purchases and deaths, are uncertain in their amount. The sum of £200. has been received for heriots on one death. The manor, including fines for renewal of leasehold estates, averaged bishop North during his prelatcy, much beyond £1,000. per annum. B.

• This sum of £3. 3s. 6d. is composed of Rent of Assize, £7. 7s.; Customs, 9s. 2d.; New Rents, 8d.; and Issues of the Fair, 6s. 8d.

This sum, being near seven hundred pounds, observes Mr. Locke, was a princely income at the time of the conquest; and as it is charged on one of the divisions only, not containing above half the hundred of Taunton, it may be thought too bountiful a gift to any church or religious order, and too large a district to be comprehended in the idea of one single manor which for extent and value cannot be paralleled in history. Its annual rent at present, as taken from an actual survey, amounts to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, an income far superior to that of any British peer, or even to several of the German princes. If the fee of this hundred, burthened, as in its present state with taxes, were to be sold at twenty three years purchase; it would amount to a sum little short of three millions and a half.

The grant of such an extensive and valuable manor must necessarily have advanced the see of Winchester to a pre-eminence in wealth and power above most, if not all, the other sees. This diocese, accordingly, was anciently valued, in the king's books, at three thousand three hundred eighty-five pounds three shillings and three-pence farthing, and is now at two thousand eight hundred seventy-three pounds eighteen shillings and one penny. It is natural to expect that of those who have filled this see, there should have been persons of the first rank and dignity. We are told it has yielded to the church ten saints, and to Rome two cardinals; to England one lord chief justice, nine lord chancellors, two lord treasurers, one lord privy seal, one chancellor of the university of Oxford, one chancellor of the exchequer, and twenty-five prelates of the order of the garter.

DESCRIPTION OF TAUNTON FROM  
DOMESDAY-BOOK.

[COMPILED IN THE YEAR 1086.]

‘ The bishop of Winchester’ holds Taunton. Archbishop Stigand (then bishop of Winchester) held it in the time of king Edward, and it paid the geld<sup>2</sup> for fifty-four hides, and two yard-lands and a half,<sup>3</sup> of which there was arable land sufficient for one hundred

<sup>1</sup> This was Walchelin, who is sometimes called in Domesday-Book, Walkelin, and Valceline. He was cousin and chaplain to the Conqueror, and professor of theology at Paris. Soon after his coming into England, he was, in the room of Stigand, who had been translated to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, consecrated bishop of Winchester, by Armingfrid, the pope’s legate, in the year 1073. Walchelin presided over that see twenty-four years, and died on the second of January, 1097. He is generally supposed to have instituted the customs of the manor of Taunton. He was succeeded in the bishopric of Winchester by William Giffard, the founder of the Priory in Taunton.

<sup>2</sup> This was the tax called Dane-geld, which was first imposed in the reign of king Ethelred about the year 991.—*See the Appendix for a detailed account of this tax.*

<sup>3</sup> Virgate, that is, *land which was held by the verge*, as most of the copyhold land in the kingdom now is, copyholders being frequently stiled *tenants by the verge*; the latin words *virgata terra* are badly translated “yard-land,” but do not signify so, the meaning being *quod tenetur per virgam*, namely, that such land was held by the yard, rod, or verge.—*Browne Willis’s Hist. of Buckingham*, p. 362.

The same author supposes that the term yard-land, *verge-land* could never signify any particular or certain measure or quantity of land, but on the contrary, rather signified a portion of land of uncertain quantity and measure, such and so much as a lord pleased

ploughs. Besides this the bishop has in demesne<sup>1</sup> twenty carucates which never paid the geld,<sup>2</sup> and thirteen ploughs. There are eighty villans, eighty-two bordars, seventy bondmen or slaves [*servi*], sixteen coliberti,<sup>3</sup> and seventeen swineherds,<sup>4</sup> who render

to grant to his villan to hold at his lord's will by the rod or verge.  
—*Ibid.* p. 363.

Four virgates made a hide. A manuscript quoted by Du Cange makes a virgate consist of twenty-four acres.—*Hutchins's Hist. of Dorset*, vol. i p. 7.

In the description of Taunton, in Domesday-Book, two virgates are called half a hide.

<sup>1</sup> Demesne has divers significations, but the more common one is to signify the lord's chief seat or mansion, with the lands belonging to it, which the lord kept and reserved for his own use, in opposition to such lands as were held of him by services.—*Willis's Hist. of Buckingham*, p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> The Demesne lands of churchmen and religious houses were excused from paying the geld, in consequence either of the eleemosynary grants by which they held their lands from the crown, or by virtue of some general grant antecedent to the commencement of this tax.—*Webb's account of Dane-geld*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> The Coliberti were a middle rank between the *Servi* and *Liberi*, doing the work of the first, but holding by the tenure of the latter. They were tenants in socage, and manumitted villans, but not absolutely free.—*Nicholls's Leicestershire*, p. xliv.

The Coliberti were a middle sort of tenants, like the *Coloni*, between servile and free, or such as held their freedom of tenure under condition of such works and services. They had their patrons to whom they paid rent, and were manumitted as servants used to be, but not absolutely free.

They were such of the *Servi* as were enfranchised, but still paid some duties to the superior lords.—*Morant's Essex*, p. 27.—*Kelham's Domesday-Book*, p. 176.

<sup>4</sup> When bacon was the chief viand of Europe, the *Porcorius* or swineherd, was a person of some importance. His employment



seven pound ten shillings, and amongst them all they have sixty ploughs.

was to superintend the hogs which fed on acorns, or the mast of the oak, in woods and forests. In the manor of Taunton, the bishop of Winchester had seventeen porcarii or swineherds.

The right of pannage, or keeping so many hogs in certain woods was a privilege of great consequence. It occurs in Domesday-Book under every town or village where a wood is mentioned to have been, and this right was carefully protected in later days.—*Gilbert's Tenures by Watkins*, p. 383.

Since the conquest we find Philip Fitz-Robert giving, among other things, one hundred bacons to the king for the wardship of the lands and heir of Ivo de Munby.—*Mag. Rot.* 1 *Joh. Rot.* 11. a.—*Madox's Exchequer*, chap. 10.

When the woods of a manor are said to have furnished the lord with so many hogs, *de pannagio*, it is to be understood of swine *fatted* with the mast and acorns; and implies in proportion to their number, that those woods abounded with beech and oak. On some manors the villans also furnished the lord with a like proportion of their swine *de herbagio*, that is, *lean swine*, such as were kept on the herbage of the woods and waste.—*Manning's Hist. of Surrey*, p. 114, *note*.

It appears from Domesday-Book, that oak trees were then of no farther consequence than from the food they afforded to swine; for the value of the woods, in several counties, is ascertained by the number of hogs they would fatten; some were of such extent as to support two thousand. The survey was taken so accurately, that in some places it is mentioned there is a wood sufficient for one hog—"Silva de una porco."

Swine fed in the woods furnished so considerable a part of the food of former ages, that a scarcity of mast was one of the causes of the frequent famines that then happened. The Saxon Chronicle, after describing the extraordinary famine and mortality of the year 1126, records particularly the failure of mast in that year.

Our Norman kings in their rage for extending forests, took away the right of pannage from those on whose lands they had encroached; this was one of the grievances that John was compelled to redress in the Charter of Forests.

There are sixty-four burgesses in Taunton who pay thirty-two shillings, or six-pence each, to the bishop of Winchester for his protection.

There are three mills which render ninety-five shillings.

The market yields fifty shillings.

There is a mint at Taunton which yields a profit of fifty shillings.

There are forty acres of meadow, a common of pasture two miles long and one mile broad ; and a wood one mile in length and the same in breadth.

When bishop Walchelin received this manor it paid fifty pounds, it now pays one hundred and forty-four pounds and thirteen-pence, with all its appendages and customs.

These are the customs of Taunton ; Burgheristh, Latrones,<sup>1</sup> Hundred-pence,<sup>2</sup> Breach of the Peace,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These two customs included the taking cognizance of, and the power of punishing house-breakers in the borough, and the judging and executing of thieves and highway-robbers.

Before the time of Canute all criminals might redeem themselves by the payment of money to the king, their lords, or to the persons offended or injured ; but by a law of that king's, breaking into houses in that manner, and with such intent, as modern law terms burglary, committing open robbery, manifest, malicious, or wilful murder, and betraying one's lord, are declared to be crimes punishable with death, and such as are not to be commuted by pecuniary mulcts or compensation.—1 *Gurdon's Hist. of Parliament*, p. 103. —*Leges Crut.* 61.

<sup>2</sup> The hundred-pence was a sum demanded and collected by the Sheriff from each tithing within his county by way of subsidy.

<sup>3</sup> This custom conferred upon the lord the power of administering justice in all misdemeanors and petty commotions.

By the 36th law of king Alfred, the fine for breach of the peace

Heinfare,<sup>1</sup> Church-set;<sup>2</sup> and St. Peter's Pence,<sup>3</sup> the

in the king's city or town of his own demesne, was one hundred and twenty shillings, to be paid to the king ; breach of the peace in the archbishop's town was ninety shillings, to be paid to him ; in a bishop's or alderman's town, sixty shillings : and in like proportion in the towns of inferior persons. The bishops, aldermen, and thanes, had towns of their own, and for breach of the peace there, being a damage done to them or their tenants, the law was highly just in giving the recompence to the party aggrieved by the offence. These privileges were enjoyed by the prelates and great landholders, under the Saxon kings, until the time of William the Conqueror, when fines for breach of the peace were remitted into the king's exchequer, and made part of the royal revenue.—1 *Gurdon's Hist. of Parliament*, p. 97.

<sup>1</sup> This word is derived from *Hein*, a servant in husbandry, (our modern *hind*) and *fara*, a departure. It signifies the absence of a servant from his master, and the forfeiture was paid to the master by any person who either killed his servant, or enticed him to run away. Heinfare is also mentioned in *Domesday-Book* among the customs of Chester.

This custom gave the lord jurisdiction over servants (bondmen or slaves, the *servi* of *Domesday-Book*) who absconded from their masters.—3 *Collinson's Som.* p. 230.

Heinfare was a forfeiture paid on running away for murder.—*Kelham's Domesday*.

It was also a recompence due to the lord for having killed his servant.—*Nash's Worcestershire*.

<sup>2</sup> This was a measure of wheat formerly paid to the church by every housekeeper on St. Martin's day, in the name of first fruits.

Cowel says that " Church-set " also meant provisions paid in kind.—*Cowel's Interpreter*.

By a law of king Ina's it is ordained that Church-set (or Church-rent, or more properly Church-seed) shall be paid at the feast of St. Martin.

<sup>3</sup> King Ina, by one of his laws, ordained, that in every family, possessed of any kind of goods to the value of twenty pence, throughout the kingdom of the West-Saxons, one penny should be

tenants attend the bishop's courts three times in the year without being summoned, and go to the army with the bishop's men.

The lands in the manor of Taunton<sup>1</sup> subject to these customs are, Tolland, Oake, Holford, Upper-Cheddon, Lower (or South) Cheddon,<sup>2</sup> (now Cheddon-Fitzpaine) Maidenbrook, Langford, Bishop's-Hull, and Heale, Ninehead, Norton (Fitzwarine,) Bradford, Halse,<sup>3</sup>

yearly collected at Lammas, and sent over to St. Peter and the church of Rome. This in the Saxon tongue was called Romescott. It was first paid under the notion of the king's alms, but was afterwards required under the name of *St. Peter's Pence*.

<sup>1</sup> This enumeration of the villages subject to Taunton, gives an idea of a complete Saxon manor, containing a principal town with numerous dependencies. The bishop of Winchester, as lord paramount, appears to have exercised within his jurisdiction many royal privileges. He administered justice in his courts to his vassals, where they took an oath of fealty to him; he had the power of trying house-breakers and robbers, and if convicted, could inflict the punishment of death upon them; and he had a mint in which he coined money.

<sup>2</sup> The lands of Cheddon, Ninehead, Orchard, Otterford, and a few small parcels, with some lands intermixed, containing twenty-three hides and a half, part of this great manor, were granted by Stigand, bishop of Winchester, to ten of the Conqueror's favourites and servants, whose successors held these lands so long under Walchelin and the succeeding bishops of Winchester, by knight's service, that they became lay-property, and not subject to the customs of this manor.—*Locke's MSS.*

<sup>3</sup> Halse, although formerly in the hundred of Taunton Dean, and described in Domesday-Book as one of the villages subject to the customs of this manor, has been severed from it, and added to the hundred of Williton-Freemanors; but Withiel-Flory and Rimpton, although locally situated in other hundreds, at a great distance, were, as being the bishop of Winchester's property, added to the hundred of Taunton Dean.—*Locke's MSS.*

Although Halse is said in the Domesday Survey, to be subject to

Heathfield, Shapnoller, (Scobindare,) and Stoke; but the tenants of the two last are not liable to go to the army.

The tenants of Bagborough are subject to the same customs, except attendance on the army and on funerals.

The tenants of all these lands come to Taunton to swear fealty and to have justice administered; and when the lords of these lands die, they are buried in Taunton.\*

Bishop's Hull and Heale could not be separated from Taunton in the time of king Edward.

Of the above said fifty-four hides and a half, and half a yard-land, Geoffrey now holds of the bishop four hides and one yard-land; Robert<sup>2</sup> holds four hides and

the customs of the manor of Taunton, yet it is put down in that record as belonging to the fee of Roger Arundel. Ailmar held it in the time of king Edward, and it was charged to the Dane-geld for four hides. The arable land was sufficient for seven ploughs. There were in demesne two ploughs, three bondmen, sixteen villans, and seven bordars, who had three ploughs and a half. There was a mill which rendered ten shillings; eight acres of meadow, twelve acres of woodland; and twenty acres of pasture. When Roger Arundel received it, it was worth one hundred shillings, but afterwards, six pounds.—*Domesday-Book under Somerset.*

\* This custom, of burying the lords of these places at Taunton, seems to have been intended for the purpose of enabling the lord paramount to claim the heriot due on the death of those who held their lands of him.

<sup>2</sup> This Robert, according to Mr. Locke's MSS, was the conqueror's constable. His lands went afterwards to the Florys, of Combe-Flory, and from them to the Meriets, and by a daughter of Sir John Meriet of Hestercombe to the Bonvilles.—*See more relating to these lands in a subsequent page.*

a half; and Hugh two hides and a half. There are in demesne ten ploughs, and twelve bondmen,<sup>1</sup> (slaves)

<sup>1</sup> The *Servi* among the ancient Germans and Saxons were of the kind called *prædiales*, who held their land and all their property at the lord's will, did his work, and were maintained by him.—1 *Hutchins's Dorset*, p. 5.

The *servi* and *villani* are all along distinguished from each other in *Domesday-Book*; but no writer has fixed the exact distinction between them. The *servi* might be the pure villans and villans in gross, who without any determinate tenure of land were at the arbitrary pleasure of the lord appointed to servile works, and received their wages and maintenance at the discretion of the lord. The other were of a superior degree, and called *villani*, villans, because they were *villa et gleba adscripti*, that is, held some cottages and lands, for which they were burthened with such stated servile works, as their lords had annexed to them.—1 *Nicholls's Leicestershire*, p. xliii.—1 *Morant's Essex*, p. 27.

The *servi* or serfs were bondmen and servants employed in the affairs of the house.—*Kelham's Domesday-Book*, p. 326.

The *servi* were pure villans living under the arbitrary pleasure of their lords.—*Rudder's Hist. of Gloucestershire*, p. 80.

The *servi* were predial servants who performed such services and works as their lords required, and had nothing but what they gained or acquired by the good will of their lords, who fed and kept them.—*Brown Willis's Hist. of Buckingham*, p. 360.

Mr. Nicholls, in his translation of the *Leicestershire* part of *Domesday-Book*, calls the *servi*, *bondmen*, and the *Ancilla*, who appear to have been women servants under circumstances nearly similar, *bondwomen*.

We have the authority of Bracton for asserting, that however unhappy the condition of the *servi* of those times was in other respects, yet their lives and limbs were under the protection of the laws; so that if the lord killed his *bondman*, he was subject to the same punishment as if he had killed any other person.—1 *Nicholls's Hist. of Leicestershire*, p. xliii.

In England slavery subsisted so late as the reign of queen Elizabeth. There is a commission still extant issued by her, in

twenty villans,<sup>1</sup> and twenty-eight bordars or cottagers, with ten ploughs. There are thirty-seven acres of meadow, and forty-three acres of woodland, and a mill which belongs to the said Hugh, of the value of three shillings. The value of these lands altogether is twenty-seven pounds.

Of the aforesaid hides,<sup>2</sup> Godwin holds under the 1574, for inquiring into the lands and goods of all her bondmen and bondwomen, in the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, and Gloucester, in order to compound with them for their manumission or freedom, that they might enjoy their own lands and goods as freemen.—*Lord Kames's Sketches of the Hist. of Man*, vol. i. p. 300, note.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of villan services see the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> This is as much land as may be tilled and cultivated with one plough, and the beasts belonging thereto in a year, having meadow, pasture, and houses for the labourers and cattle belonging to it. The *hide* was the measure of land in the Confessor's reign—the *carucate* that to which it was reduced by the Conqueror's new standard. Thus every place is said to have paid geld for so many hides in the time of king Edward, and then follows its present measure of so many carucates, or by how many ploughs it could be cultivated. Thus in Taunton there were upwards of fifty-four hides of land which required one hundred ploughs to cultivate it.—The hide and the carucate however, consisted of various quantities, according to the nature of the soil and the custom of husbandry in every county.

The hide is the great measure of Domesday-Book in most counties, but in those of Nottingham, Derby and Lincoln, only carucates are mentioned. In Dorsetshire there are both. The hide is estimated to contain one hundred and ten acres, and sometimes one hundred and twenty.—1 *Hutchins's Hist. of Dorset*, p. 6.

The distribution of England by hides of land is very ancient, mention being made thereof in the laws of Ina, about the year 690.—*Browne Willis's Hist. of Buckingham*, p. 358.

The certainty of measuring lands did not come in until the reign

bishop two, wanting half a yard-land ; Leveva holds two hides ; Alward holds one, and one yard-land and a half ; Aluric and Edmer hold three hides ; and Lewi half a yard-land. There are indemesne seven ploughs and thirteen bondmen, (slaves) thirteen villans, and twenty bordars<sup>1</sup> with three ploughs and a half. There

was under tribute to the Danes, which was about the 30th of king Ethelred, for the levying of which tribute, the realm was admeasured and the money levied by hides, and all paid their Dane-geld according to the number of hides they possessed.—*Appx. Reg. Richm.* p. 3.

<sup>1</sup> The *bordarii* or *bordars* are understood to have been cottagers, or boors, who held a little house of husbandry, with some land, on condition they should supply their lord with some small provision for his board or entertainment.—*Browne Willis's Hist. of Buckingham.* p. 360.

Spelman observes that the word *bordarius* is Norman, and in Domesday-Book is always placed after *villani*, and probably from thence, it may be inferred, that the *bordarii* were inferior to the *villani* in rank. That the *bordarii* were employed in raising provisions for their lord's table, seems to be implied by the name ; and if we consider that at the time of compiling Domesday-Book, the generality of rents were reserved in victuals, and not in money, this will somewhat strengthen the conjecture that the business of the *bordarii* was probably to take care of provision for their lord's table.—*Ibid.* p. 363.

The *bordarii* were distinct from the *servi* and *villani*, and seem to have been those of a less servile condition, who had a *bord* or cottage, with a small parcel of land allowed them.—*Cowel's Interpreter.*

The *bordarii* were drudges, and performed vile services, which were reserved by the lord upon a poor little house, and a small parcel of land, and might perhaps be domestic works, such as grinding, threshing, drawing water, cutting wood, &c.—*Houard, Traites sur les Coutumes Anglo-Normandes*, p. 204—*Brady's Pref. Hist. Engl.* p. 56.

They held a little house of husbandry on the *bords* or outsidcs of the manor.—*1 Morant's Essex*, p. xxvii.



are two mills, which yield yearly six shillings and eight pence. There are forty-five acres of meadow, and sixty-one acres of woodland. The value of these lands altogether is eight pounds, three shillings. The tenants who held these lands in the time of king Edward, could not be separated from the church of Winchester.

Of the abovesaid hides, the earl of Moreton' holds

The bordarii were tenants that paid poultry, and other provisions for the lord's board or table.—3 *Blomefield's Norf.* p. 548.

*Borda* signifies a cottage, with a small piece of land annexed, held by the service of finding for the lord, poultry, eggs, &c. for his *bwrdd*, or table.—1 *Pennant's Tours in Wales*, p. 10.

Some lands are still held of the bishop of London, the tenants paying sixpence per acre in lieu of sending provisions anciently for their lord's table. This payment is called *bord-service*.

<sup>1</sup> Robert, earl of Moreton in Normandy, and afterwards of Cornwall in England, was half-brother of the Conqueror, his father Harlowen de Burgh having married Ariotte, the mother of William. He contributed to the expedition against England no less than one hundred and twenty ships, for which he was rewarded with seven hundred and ninety-three manors in different counties. He died in 1091, and was succeeded by his son William, who, according to some historians, being denied the earldom of Kent by Henry I. entered into treasonable practises against that king, in consequence of which about the year 1103, the great possessions of this earl in England became forfeited to the crown. His estates in Normandy were given by the king to Stephen, son of the earl of Blois, who thereupon had the title of earl of Moreton, and was afterwards king of England.—William, second earl of Moreton and Cornwall, left issue two sons, Adelm and John. The first married Agnes, daughter of Lewis VII. king of France, by whom he had William Fitz-Adelm, ancestor of the De Burghs, earls of Clanricarde in Ireland. John, the second son, was father of Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent.—*Domesday-Book*; *Dugdale's Baronage*, vol. i. —*Lyttelton's History of Henry II.*

one; Alured one; John<sup>1</sup> two and half a yard-land. There are in demesne two ploughs; and six bondmen, twelve villans, and seventeen bordars, with three ploughs and a half.<sup>2</sup> There are two mills which yield fourteen shillings and two pence, and nineteen acres of meadow, and a hundred acres of pasture, and twenty acres of woodland. These three parcels of land belonged to Taunton in the time of king Edward, and were of the yearly value of seventy shillings; they now pay six pounds, ten shillings.

To the manor of Taunton are added two hides and and a half in Lydeard-St.-Lawrence and Leigh (now Anger's-Leigh) which a thane held in parage<sup>3</sup> in the time of king Edward, and could choose for his patron, or protector, whatever lord he pleased; Ulward and Alward now hold these lands, by a grant from king

<sup>1</sup> This John, according to Mr. Locke's MSS. was porter of the Conqueror's palace. The lands which he held in the manor of Taunton, under the bishop of Winchester, passed with the heiress of his family to Thomas Cogan, (called Richard by Locke) whose grand-daughter married Sir Fulke Fitzwarine.—*See more of the descent of these lands under the manor of Taunton.*

<sup>2</sup> The lord's plough was drawn by four oxen, a villan's plough generally by two, and half a plough, which term frequently occurs in Domesday-Book, means half the number of oxen drawing the plough, or only one ox (in a villan's case) to a plough.—*Homesdale's Translation of Domesday-Book*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> I understand the word *Parage* to mean that the thane here mentioned held this land as a partitioner or co-parcener, and as the portion which had come to him on an equal division of the inheritance among the co-heirs. Or it might be that he was a younger brother, and held his share of the fee of his elder brother, and he of the lord.—*See Comel's Interpreter, Du Fresno, and Brady's Preface*, p. 165.

**William.** The arable is sufficient for five ploughs; there are six villans, three bordars, and four bondmen, and eleven acres of meadow, a hundred acres of pasture, and forty-nine acres of woodland. These lands were, and are still, worth forty-five shillings.

The customs and services of these lands always belonged to Taunton, and king William granted them to the church of St. Peter of Winchester, and to Walchelin the bishop, as he himself testified in the presence of the bishop of Durham, to whom he gave command to prepare a writ to that effect.

#### HUNDRED OF TAUNTON-DEAN.

The hundred of Taunton-Dean is divided into three parts or districts, namely, the hundred of Taunton market, the infaring division, and the outfaring division.

The hundred of *Taunton market*, is so called in all the records of the manor, and comprehends that part which is distinguished as the borough of Taunton.

The *infaring division*, commonly called *The Five Hundreds of Taunton-Dean*, is subdivided into the hundreds of Holway, Hull, Poundisford, Staplegrove, and Nailsbourne; all of which are subject to the customs of this manor. This division includes the parishes of Taunton-Saint-James, Ruishton, Stoke-Saint-Mary, Wilton, Trull, Bishop's-Hull, Pitminster, Corfe, Staplegrove, Kingston, and Rimpton.\*

\* The parish of Rimpton lies detached, and at a great distance from the other parts of the hundred of Taunton-Dean, being six miles north-east from Yeovil, and about two north-east from Sherborne, in Dorsetshire. The reason of this spot being annexed to the hundred of Taunton, is, that the manor has been from very

The *outfaring division* contains the several parishes of Anger's-Leigh, Bagborough, Bradford, Cheddon-Fitzpaine, Combe-Flory, Cotheleston, Heathfield, Hill-Farrance, Lydeard-Saint-Lawrence, Ninehead, Norton-Fitzwarine, Oake, Orchard-Portman, Otterford, Tolland, and Withiel-Flory.

In little more than three hundred years after the grant of this manor to the see of Winchester, the last-mentioned sixteen parishes belonging to it, were given by king William, soon after the conquest, to his favourites, and thus became lay-property.

Thirty-one hides of this manor, with twenty carucates which never paid the Dane-geld, having been so long granted to customary tenants by copy of court-roll, under small fines certain, rents, heriots, and services, the latter have grown into customs, and at length were presented as such by the jury in 1647, and cannot now be altered. This holding is considered by the tenants as equal to a fee-simple tenure.<sup>1</sup>

The estimated annual value of the lands and houses in this hundred, on which the property-tax was levied in the year 1814—15, was one hundred and four thousand and seventy-eight pounds, being one-twentieth part of the estimated annual value of the real property of the county of Somerset.

The proportion of the county rate assessed upon this hundred is one hundred and eight pounds, eight shillings, and three-pence half-penny.

ancient time part of the estate of the bishoprick of Winchester, and the tenants were formerly bound to do suit at the bishop's court in Taunton.

<sup>1</sup> Locke's MSS. now in the possession of Mr. Josiah Easton of Bradford.

The population of the hundred of Taunton-Dean, according to the returns made in the year 1811, amounted to nine thousand two hundred and twelve, namely, four thousand four hundred and eleven males, and four thousand eight hundred and one females. There were one thousand two hundred and ninety-two persons employed in agriculture, and three hundred and sixty-seven in trade and manufactures. The number of houses was one thousand six hundred and twenty.

#### MANOR OF TAUNTON AND TAUNTON-DEAN.

The manor of Taunton-Dean is bounded on the north by the manors of Broomfield and Iton; on the north-east by the manors of West-Monkton and Cheddon-Fitzpaine; on the east by the manors of Creech-Saint-Michael and Thorn-Falcon, and the rivulet called Blackbrook; on the south-east by the manors of Thurlbeer, Orchard-Portman and Staple-Fitzpaine; on the south and south-west by the manors of Yarcombe, Church-Stanton, Clayhidon, and West-Buckland; on the west by the manor of Bradford; and on the north-west by the manors of Bishop's-Lydeard and Cothelestone.

The customary lands within the manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, are thus described, namely,

#### *In the hundred of Holway,*

The tithings of Ruishton and Henlade in the parish of Ruishton; of Holway in the parish of Taunton-Saint-Mary-Magdalen; of Stoke in the parish of Stoke-Saint-Mary; of Chipleigh in the parish of Ninehead; of Galmington and Sherford in the parish of Wilton.

*In the hundred of Hull,*

The tithing of Dipford in the parish of Trull; of Hull and Rumwell in the parish of Bishop's-Hull; and of North-Trendle in the parish of Pitminster.

*In the hundred of Poundisford,*

The tithing of South-Trendle, of Blagdon, Pitminster, South-Fulford, Duddleston, and Corfe, all in the parish of Pitminster.

*In the hundred of Staplegrove,*

The tithings of Staplegrove and Byrland, in the parish of Staplegrove; of Pyrland, Obridge, Mill-Lane, and Grassgrove in the parish of Taunton-Saint-James; of Holford in Combe-Flory and Lydeard-St.-Lawrence; and of Ilbeer in the parish of Kingston.

*In the hundred of Nailsbourne,*

The tithings of Kingston, Nailsbourne, North-Fulford, Cushaish, and Tetton, all in the parish of Kingston.

In the time of Walter Curle, bishop of Winchester, who succeeded bishop Neale, in 1632, an act of parliament was passed, during the Cromwell usurpation, authorizing the sale of all lands belonging to episcopal sees. By the return of the surveyors appointed under this act, for surveying the manor of Taunton, dated February 9th 1647, in order to its being sold, it was found that the tenants of the five hundreds paid at the first coming-in of every bishop of Winchester, by way of acknowledgment, called *recognition money*, as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.
The tenants of the hundred of Holway, - -	24	1	5½
The tenants of the hundred of Hull, - -	10	2	6
The tenants of the hundred of Poundisford,	12	15	10
The tenants of the hundred of Staplegrove,	13	1	3½
The tenants of the hundred of Nailsbourne,	9	17	10

The recognition money is paid by bondland tene-ments only ; and the tenants serve the office of reeve in rotation.

Previously to the sale of this manor taking place, the copyhold tenants were anxious to preserve their rights and customs, and accordingly a court of survey was holden at Taunton, by an ordinance of parliament, on the 15th day of December, 1647, by Nathaniel Whetham, John Hurst, James Price, and Sylvanus Taylor, surveyors appointed for the sale of bishop's lands, when a jury being sworn, the jurors drew up a presentment in which they inserted a full account of the privileges and immunities claimed by the tenants of the manor and liberty of Taunton, or belonging and appertaining to them, and which their predecessors had heretofore enjoyed, by virtue of any charter or grant made and granted to the several bishops of Winchester. This jury defended and preserved from the grasp of the parliamentary commissioners, the customs of the manor, and reserved and restored the possession of the castle to the then lessee.

Accordingly on the 20th of March 1647, the manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, together with the castle and all the appurtenances belonging to the same, were sold by the trustees, under the above-mentioned act, to Brampton Gurdon, of Assington, in the county of Suffolk, esq. and John Hill, of Taunton-Dean, gent. But the manor was afterwards recovered by the bishop and is vested in the see of Winchester.

The family of HILL resided at Spaxton, in this county. The first of whom any mention is made, is Sir John Hill, of Houndston, who was made a knight-banneret by Edward the third, in whose

reign he died, as appears by an inquisition taken in the 15th year of that king.

Robert Hill, Esq. son of Sir John, married Isabella, sister and heiress of Sir Thomas Fichet of Spaxton, with whom he had the manor of Spaxton.

This Robert Hill was a person of great note, and several times sheriff of the counties of Somerset and Dorset. To a deed of his, dated 4th of Henry 4th, there are two seals appendant; the one, per pale, a saltire vairy, between four mullets, the arms of Hill; the other, a lion rampant debruised with a bend, being the coat, somewhat altered, of the family of Fichet. The inscription *Stigillum Roberti Hilli*. He died 1st of Henry 6th, leaving issue by the said Isabella,

John Hill, his son and heir, who died 13th of Henry 6th, and was father of

Sir John Hill,<sup>1</sup> of Spaxton, knt. who married Joan, daughter and heiress of William Bannister, Esq. by Elizabeth his wife, daughter and heiress of Philip Wellesleigh, esq.

John Hill of Spaxton, grandson of Sir John last mentioned, married Cecily, daughter and heiress of Robert Aston, esq. whose son John Hill, married Cecily, daughter and co-heiress of John Sturton, esq. by his wife Catharine, daughter and heiress to Thomas Fitzpaine. This John left his estate to Robert his heir, who married Dorothy, daughter and heiress of Thomas Flannock, esq. of the county of Cornwall.

William, grandson of the said Robert, removed to Yard, in this county, and his son Roger Hill, esq. in the time of king Henry 8th, removed to Poundisford, near Taunton, whose lineal heir, Roger, of Poundisford, esq. (by Catharine his first wife, daughter

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<sup>1</sup> This Sir John Hill appears to have been twice married. By Margaret daughter of Sir Walter Rodney, knt. he left issue a daughter and heiress, Genovefa, wife of Sir William Say, knt. who dying without children, the estate reverted to Elizabeth, sister and heiress of the last John Hill, and aunt to the said Genovefa; which Elizabeth was married to John Cheyney of Pinhoe, in the county of Devon, esq.—*Collinson's Hist. of Som.* vol. i. p. 244.—*Lodge's Peerage of Ireland*, vol. vii. p. 212.



of Giles Green, of the county of Dorset, esq.) had issue William, and by Abigail his second wife, daughter of Brampton Gardon, of Assington, in the county of Suffolk, esq. had Sir Roger, who in the reign of Charles 2d, settled at Denham, in the county of Bucks, and upon the death of his brother William, without issue, became possessed of the estate of Poundisford.

Sir Roger Hill, of Denham, left issue an only daughter and heiress, Abigail, married to John Lockay, esq. whose only daughter and heiress became the third wife of Lewis Way, of Richmond, in Surrey, esq. whose only daughter, Abigail, married in 1767, John Baker Holroyd, esq. afterwards created earl of Sheffield.

#### TENURE OF THE MANOR OF TAUNTON-DEAN.

The manor of Taunton-Dean consists for the most part of customary freehold lands and tenements of inheritance,<sup>1</sup> which are divided into two kinds, namely, *bondlands*, which are the ancient dwelling tenements, held by a customary fine and rent certain, and subject to heriots and manerial services; and *overlands*, where anciently no dwelling stood, held by a fine and rent certain, but exempted from the payment of heriots, and from every other custom, suit, and service.

The bondland tenements oblige the tenants to execute the office of reeve, and to collect the bishop's rents.<sup>2</sup>

Formerly a court was held at the exchequer, every Saturday, before the steward, or his deputy, for adjusting disputes among the tenants, and for recovering small debts; but as the fee for a summons

<sup>1</sup> Lands which are held according to the custom of the manor, and not at the will of the lord, though they pass by copy of court-roll, are termed *customary freeholds*.—See *Salkeld*, 365.

<sup>2</sup> Locke's MSS. and Customs of the Manor of Taunton-Dean. T.

was only one-penny, for an attachment four-pence, for a declaration six-pence, an appearance two-pence, and so in proportion with regard to other fees, it has for many years fallen into disuse; for those fees, having been established with the customs of the manor, as early as the eleventh century, cannot be altered,<sup>1</sup> though the value of money, to which all fees should bear a proportion, is greatly changed and reduced since that period.<sup>2</sup>

The customs and fines to which this tenure is subject, are many and various; and an accurate knowledge of them can be obtained only by long experience. The mode of succession in this manor, is singular, and is sometimes productive of very serious evils to families; for estates, according to the custom of it, descend to the widow of a man, though a second or third wife, to the prejudice of the issue

<sup>1</sup> These fees have been altered for a century past. B.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Locke published some years ago a little tract, to which we would refer the reader, entitled, "The Customs of the Manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean," carefully copied from the original record, to which are added the names of the jury, a copy of their presentment, a list of the freehold lords of manors who did service at that court, and some other particulars. T.

This tract having become very scarce, it has been lately reprinted by the editor of this work.

There has recently been published, in an octavo volume, "The Ancient Customs of the Manor of Taunton-Dean, collected from the Records of the Manor, presented by the Jury at the Law-day Court, the 24th day of April, 1817, and published under their sanction. To which are prefixed some Introductory Observations on Copyholds in general, and Remarks on those of this Manor in particular, with the Origin, History, and Nature of Court Leet and Court Baron. By H. B. Shillibeer, Land-Surveyor, Taunton."

under a prior marriage, who are totally precluded, though the lands were the ancient inheritance of their father.

‘In the fourteenth article of the printed customs of this manor, it is said, that “If a tenant die seized of any customary lands or tenements of inheritance within the said manor, having a wife at the time of his death, then his wife ought and hath used, time out of mind, to inherit the same lands, as next heir unto her husband, by the custom of the said manor, and to be admitted tenant thereunto, to hold the same unto her and her heirs for ever, according to the custom of the said manor, and in as ample manner as any other customary tenant there holdeth his lands, under the rents, fines, heriots, customs, duties, suits, and services for the same, due and accustomed.”

‘In the fifteenth article it is said, “If any tenant die seized of any customary lands or tenements of inheritance within the said manor, having no wife at the time of his death, and having but one son, then that son ought and hath used, by the custom there, to inherit the same land, as heir to his father; but if he hath more sons than one, then the youngest son hath used to have and inherit the same, as sole heir to his father, by the custom of the said manor, and so likewise of daughters, if he hath more than one, and die without issue male, the youngest daughter ought and hath used to inherit the same, as sole heir to her said father, by the custom of the said manor; but if such tenant hath neither wife, son, or daughter, then the youngest brother of the whole blood ought and hath used to inherit the same lands, and if he hath no

brother of the whole blood, then the youngest sister of the whole blood ; and if he hath neither brother nor sister, then this is a rule in the said custom, that the youngest next of kin of the whole and worthiest blood ought and hath used to inherit and hold the lands to him and his heirs for ever, or to her and her heirs for ever, under the fines, rents, heriots, customs, duties, suits, and services due for the same, by the custom of the said manor."

The custom by which the younger son inherits before the elder, this tenure has in common with that called Borough-English. The learned have been at a loss to ascertain the origin and ground of a custom, which thus inverts the order of nature. Sir William Blackstone conjectures, with great judgment, that it might be deduced from the Tartars. Amongst this people the eldest sons, as they advanced to man's estate, migrated from their father with a certain portion of cattle, and the youngest son only remaining at home, became, in consequence, heir to the father's house and all his remaining possessions. This conjecture not only assigns a natural and rational reason for a custom, that on the face of it wears a strange appearance ; but is confirmed by the consideration, that not only this custom was long prevalent, in Tartary and the northern nations, but many other feudal practices prevail there ; nay the whole feudal system, while in Europe it is an exotic plant, is indigenous, universal, and immemorial in the east.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richardson's Dissertation on the Language, Literature, and Manners of the Eastern Nations, p. 153, 160, 162. T.

We find that, among many other northern nations, it was the

Will not the same principle assign also the origin of the other peculiarity in the succession of estates in this manor? For as in the course of events, the younger son would frequently be left in a state of minority, the mother, as his natural guardian, would succeed to the immediate possession and enjoyment of the father's estate.

‘ In the twenty-eighth article it is said, that “ All the customary tenants, having estates of inheritance of or in any customary lands or tenements of the said manor, have used time out of mind to fell their timber or wood growing upon their customary lands, and to spend or sell the same, at their wills and pleasure, without any controlment, by the custom of the said manor.”

custom for all the sons but one to migrate from the father, which one became his heir. So that possibly this custom, wherever it prevails, may be the remnant of that pastoral life led by the ancient Britons and Germans, which is described by Cæsar and Tacitus.—*Ency. Brit. sub voc. Borough-English.*

Father Du Halde says, that amongst the Tartars, the youngest of the males is always the heir, by reason that as soon as the elder are capable of leading a pastoral life, they leave the house with a certain number of cattle given them by the father, and go to build a new habitation. The last of the males who continues in the house with the father, is then his natural heir.—1 *Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws*, p. 401.

Montesquieu says, that he has heard a like custom was also observed in some small districts of England. This was doubtless a pastoral law, conveyed thither by some of the people of Brittany, or established by some German nation. We are informed by Cæsar and Tacitus, that these last cultivated little land.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 401.

A custom with respect to inheritance that prevails among the new settlers in America, may illustrate the tenure of Taunton-Dean.—*See Monthly Mag. for July, 1805, p. 547.*

‘ By the eleventh and twelfth articles the payment of heriots is thus provided for :—

“ In case any customary tenant die seized of any bondland, within the said manor, or make an absolute surrender of the same bondland there; then, upon such death or surrender, is an heriot<sup>1</sup> due to the lord, by the custom, viz. for every bond tenement, except customary cottages, the best quick beast of him that so died seized, or made surrender; or if he had no quick beast, bona fide, then sixpence for every such heriot, and no more. And for choice of all heriot beasts, all the best quick beasts of the same tenant, so dying or surrendering, ought and have been used to be brought into the pound in the castle of Taunton, at the next three-weeken court after such death or surrender; at which time the clerk of the castle,

<sup>1</sup> The Saxon thane lands were *allodial*, and free from all burthens and payments, but Canute introduced heriots (which the translators of his laws render *Releviamenta*, whereas the original Saxon word is *Heregeat*) which was contrived by that monarch, it being *militie apparatus*, he took the people's arms in order to keep his new conquests in subjection, and to support the strength and military furniture of his newly-acquired dominions. The Saxon heriot was paid in habiliments of war out of the goods of the deceased; the Norman relief was paid in money by the heir, that the lord might not have *inutilem proprietatem* in his seignory. The heriot was yielded whether the son or heir enjoyed the land or not, but the relief was a composition with the lord, and paid to relieve or redeem the land that was fallen into the lord's hands, as *renovatio et restauratio Feodi*.—2 *Gurdon's Hist. of Parl.* p. 550.

By the laws of Canute, at the death of the great men of this realm, so many horses and arms were to be paid as they were in their respective life-times obliged to keep for the king's service.—*Rel. Spelm.* 31, 32, 33.—*Leges Cnut.* 75.

keeping the lord's court, ought and hath used to charge two of the tenants of the hundred, where the land lieth, upon their oaths, to choose the best quick beasts, and to prize the same indifferently ; and after prizing the same, then the lord's clerk' of the castle, or other officer, is forthwith to be at his choice, whether he will have the same heriot or heriots, or the money they are prized at, to the use of the lord. And if the same officer make choice of the heriot, then he is, by the custom, to take the same to the lord's use, and to account for the same ; but if he make choice of the money, then the same beast, by the custom there used ought to remain to the executor of the tenant so dying, who ought to find two sufficient pledges of the tenants of the same hundred, where the lands do lie, to pay the same money into the hands of the reeve of the same hundred, at some convenient time before the audit next following. But if the lord's officer and the executor refuse to take the heriot beast at the price it is appraised at, then the prizers thereof ought and have used to take the same heriot at the same price, and to find pledges to pay the same unto the lord's reeve ; and then the reeve is to pay the same at the next audit.

“ When any customary tenant of inheritance purposeth to make an absolute surrender of his heriotable land, having quick cattle or beasts, and before such surrender do compound with the clerk of the castle for the time being, for the heriot to be due upon the same surrender ; in such cases, by the custom of the

<sup>3</sup> At present the custom is for the steward of the manor to settle the value of the heriot. · B.

said manor, the said lord ought and hath been used to be answered of his heriot according to such composition, and not otherwise."

' There is now paid in the manor of Taunton, as a heriot on every alienation, for,

	£.	s.	d.
A yard-land, - - - - -	8	0	0
A half-yard-land, - - - - -	4	0	0
A fifteen-acre tenement, - - - - -	3	15	0
A farthing land, - - - - -	3	0	0
A ten-acre tenement, - - - - -	2	15	0
An eight-acre tenement, - - - - -	1	15	0
A five-acre tenement, - - - - -	1	5	0

A heriot of the best beast becomes due on death, and if the tenant hath none, then six-pence only.

' The ninth article relates to dormant surrenders, and is as follows :—

" Of this kind of conditional surrenders customary, there is, and always hath been, a dormant surrender, often also in use within the said manor; and that is, when a tenant is purposed to settle his land on any person or persons, whom he intendeth to make his heir or heirs, or to charge the same with any sum or sums of money, or for the performance of his last will and testament. In this case, such tenant hath used to come to the clerk of the castle, or his deputy, and to surrender his lands to the use of any person or persons, at his will and pleasure, for the performance of such purposes as are above mentioned, or either of them, at the discretion of the surrenderer; such surrenders to be published and take effect after the death of the surrenderer, he leaving in himself nevertheless the present possession and interest of the said lands so



surrendered. In every of which surrenders there must be a condition inserted, by which a power is always reserved to the surrenderer to revoke, frustrate, and make void the same surrender, within the space of seven years, at his discretion,<sup>1</sup> by the custom of the said manor.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The dormant surrender becomes void after the expiration of seven years. B.

<sup>2</sup> The act of 55 Geo. III. cap. 192, has rendered dormant surrenders, as to lands which are strictly copyhold, unnecessary. It is therein enacted “That in all cases where by the custom of any manor in England or Ireland any copyhold tenant of such manor, may by his or her last will and testament, dispose of his or her copyhold tenements, the same having been surrendered to such uses as should be declared by such last will and testament, every disposition or charge made or to be made by any such last will and testament by any person who shall die after the passing of this act of any such copyhold tenements or of any right, title, or interest, in or to the same, shall be as valid and effectual to all intents and purposes, although no surrender shall have been made to the use of the last will and testament of such person, as the same would have been if a surrender had been made to the use of such will.

“No person entitled, or claiming to be entitled, to copyhold lands, tenements, or hereditaments in consequence of any testamentary disposition shall be entitled to be admitted to the same, by virtue of any thing in this act contained, except upon payment of all such stamp-duties, fees, and sums of money as would have been lawfully due and payable in respect of the surrendering of such copyhold lands, tenements, or hereditaments to the use of such will, or in respect of the presenting, registering, or enrolling such surrender had the same lands, tenements, and hereditaments been surrendered, to the use of the will of the person so disposing of the same.”

It may here be observed, that this act does not contain any clause by which the lord of a manor is compelled to admit any copyhold tenant otherwise than according to the custom of the

The inconveniences, which must sometimes arise from these singular customs, are in a degree, counter-balanced by the mode of conveyance practised in this manor; which is by a surrender of the estate, upon every sale or mortgage, into the hands of the lord; which surrender is lodged in the exchequer, or the room where all the titles of the manor are repositd, and may at any time be examined. This makes it easy to prove the validity of a title, and is a security against all frauds in mortgages.

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‘ In the first edition of this work, it is said that the manor of Taunton, which originally included the town and borough, is now distinct from it, the latter now standing, for the most part, on fee-simple lands, subject to chief rents, called bishop’s rents.’ When this separation took place is a matter of some doubt.

manor. Therefore the old practice, relating to dormant surrenders, will probably be found still to be the safest.

Customary estates parcels of the manor of Taunton-Dean, are not held *at the will of the lord*, but according to the custom of the manor, and are therefore not copyhold.—*Vide Comberb. 387; Carthew, 432; Salkeld, 365.*

\* The houses in that part of the borough of Taunton, now subject to the payment of bishop’s rent, appear to have been so long held under those fee-farm rents as to have become freeholds, and have not been questioned since the reign of Edward the fourth. Besides the above freeholds, some houses are held by the customs, and a few on leases for lives under Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, bart. and Edward Berkeley Portman, Esq. The king’s lands were a parcel of forfeited houses, now held by lessees. The town-lands or fee-fee-lands, were originally seized by the constables to be kept for the heirs of former owners, who died of a pestilential disease. These are also granted on leases for lives.—*Locke’s MSS.*

Some are of opinion that it was dismembered, 1421, by Henry Beaufort, son of John of Gaunt, who was translated to the see of Winchester in 1405. But his successor, William of Waynfleet, in the sixth year of Edward the fourth, made a grant in fee of the guild-hall, in Taunton, (some years since pulled down) to Nicholas Dixon, the perpetual vicar of Saint Mary Magdalen, under the yearly tribute of a red rose, as a mark of attachment and loyalty to the house of Lancaster. In this grant, the town, borough, and market are said to belong to the see of Winchester. This shews that the fee-simple estates, considered as disjointed from the Taunton-Dean tenure, must have been granted to the freeholders since 1467.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Locke's MSS.

*' Copy of the Confirmation by Inspeximus, of a grant of land in the borough of Taunton, as a site for a Guild-hall.*

" To all the sons of holy mother church, to whom these letters shall come, Robert, by divine permission, prior of the cathedral church of St. Swithin, Winchester, and convent of the same, sendeth greeting in our LORD God everlasting. Know ye that we have inspected the letters patent of the most Rev. Father in Christ, William, by divine permission, lord bishop of Winchester, in these words :—

" To all christian people to whom this present writing indented shall come—William Waynfleet, by divine permission, bishop of Winchester, sendeth greeting in our LORD God everlasting. Know ye that we the aforesaid bishop have given, and granted, and by this our present writing indented have confirmed, unto Nicholas Dixon, perpetual vicar of the parish church of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, in the county of Somerset, a certain parcel of our land lying in the middle of our market-place of our borough of Taunton aforesaid, in a certain place there where the ancient water-course was wont to run ; the said parcel of land containing in length

sixty-three feet, and in breadth thirty feet, and extending itself by the space aforesaid from the north part of the said borough towards the south thereof, to the intent nevertheless and always so as the said Nicholas upon the said parcel of land granted to him as aforesaid shall to our perpetual remembrance and for the special honour, praise, and favour of the burgesses and the whole people of the borough aforesaid, make, erect, and new build, or cause to be made, erected, and new built, a certain convenient hall or place of judicature, there, at his own proper costs and charges in the best way and manner which may be for the honour, commodity, and profit of the burgesses of the said borough and commonalty, there, to be applied or made most convenient and profitable, to have and to hold the whole parcel of land aforesaid, with all houses and places so thereupon built, to the aforesaid Nicholas, his heirs and assigns for ever, yielding therefore, yearly, unto us and our successors, at the exchequer in Taunton aforesaid, at the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, one red rose<sup>1</sup> for all services and demands, reserving nevertheless to us and our successors, to all our servants and ministers free ingress and regress at all times to our courts there to be held by one key peaceably remaining in the hands of our clerk and his successors for the courts of the borough aforesaid there appointed to be held without the contradiction or impediment of the said Nicholas, or of any other whatsoever, and the said Nicholas his heirs and assigns the said hall and judicial place when it shall be so built upon the land aforesaid in all things shall sustain and maintain at his and their own proper costs and charges—And we the aforesaid bishop and our successors, the land aforesaid, with all houses and places so thereupon built, unto the aforesaid Nicholas, his heirs and assigns, against all people shall warrant and for ever defend by these presents, in testimony whereof to one part of these indentures wholly remaining with us the aforesaid bishop, the said

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<sup>1</sup> The reserved rent of a *red rose* in lieu of all services and demands, refers to the civil contests of those times, between the houses of York and Lancaster, and marked the attachment of bishop Waynfleet to the latter. Tenures founded on such customs are monuments of the taste and manners, the literature and party-feeling of the age.

Dr. Toulmin then states that "on the death of Elizabeth, lady Bonville, the manor of Taunton came to her grand-daughter and heiress, Cicely, the daughter of her eldest son, William, lord Harrington, who was slain before at the battle of Wakefield,<sup>1</sup> and that she married John Bouchier, lord Fitzwarine, afterwards created earl of Bath, and carried this manor into that family."

' In this short statement there are two or three errors which it will be necessary to set right.

' The "Cicely" here spoken of was Cecilia, great-grand-daughter of the William lord Bonville, beheaded at St. Alban's as above-mentioned. Her descent was in this manner.—William lord Bonville of Chewton, married Margaret, daughter and coheiress of sir John Meriet, knt. and had issue William Bonville, who married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of William lord Harrington, and died in his father's lifetime, leaving issue William de Bonville, who inherited from his mother the title of lord Harrington; this William lord Harrington was killed in the battle of Wakefield, 1469, in the lifetime of his grand-father; he married Catharine, daughter of Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury, and by her had the above-mentioned *Cecilia*, his only daughter, who on the death of her father and great-grand-father, became baroness Bonville of Chewton, and baroness Harrington, titles now enjoyed by the earl of Stamford.—On the death of her great-grand-mother, lady Bonville, she inherited all the lands of that lady's dowry, and carried them in

<sup>1</sup> *Mag. Brit. et Hib. Somerset*, p. 808.

marriage to her husband, Thomas Grey, marquess of Dorset.

‘ This Cecilia was twice married,<sup>1</sup> but neither of her husbands was John Bouchier, lord Fitzwarine, as mentioned by Dr. Toulmin. She was first the wife of Thomas Grey, marquess of Dorset, (son of Elizabeth Grey, queen of Edward the fourth,) by whom she had seven sons and eight daughters,—of whom, Thomas succeeded his father as second marquess of Dorset; he married Margaret, the daughter of sir Robert Wotton, of Bocton, in Kent, knt. and had issue, Henry and John, the latter of whom was the ancestor of the present earl of Stamford.

‘ Henry, the eldest son, succeeded his father as third marquess of Dorset, and was created duke of Suffolk; he married Frances, daughter of Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, by Mary, daughter of king Henry the seventh, and widow of Lewis the twelfth, king of France, and left issue, three daughters, Jane, Catharine, and Mary, of whom Jane, the eldest, was the unfortunate lady Jane Grey, to whom the above-mentioned Cecilia, baroness Bonville and Harrington, was great-grand-mother.—Catharine, the second daughter, was the wife of Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford. Jane and Mary both died without issue.

‘ We now come to John, second son of Henry Grey, duke of Suffolk, who was seated at Pirgo, in Essex. He married Mary, daughter of Sir Anthony Browne,

<sup>1</sup> Cecilia Bonville, relict of Thomas Grey, marquess of Dorset, married to her second husband, Henry Stafford, earl of Wiltshire, whom she survived, and departed this life in the 19th of Henry the eighth, 1527, and was buried at Astley, in the county of Warwick.

and had issue, Henry Grey, created lord Grey of Groby, who married Anne, daughter of William lord Windsor, and had issue, sir John Grey, whose son, Henry, was created earl of Stamford; his eldest son Thomas, lord Grey, well known for the active part he took against king Charles the first, died in his father's life-time, leaving by Dorothy, daughter and co-heiress of Edward Bouchier, fourth earl of Bath, Thomas, who succeeded his grand-father, as second earl of Stamford, and was, in his own right, the representative of the lords Bonville, and, in right of his mother, the representative of the Bouchiers, Hankfords, Fitzwarines, and Cogans.

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‘ It may be proper to mention that John Bouchier, lord Fitzwarine, who was created earl of Bath, (and who is said by Dr. Toulmin to have been the husband of Cecilia Bonville) married Cecily, only sister of Henry Daubeney, earl of Bridgwater. The father of this John, lord Fitzwarine, is said by sir William Dugdale (Baronage, vol. 2, p. 131,) to have died in the 19th of king Edward the fourth, seized of the manors of Norton, Taunton, (still meaning lands lying within the manor of Taunton) Nunnington, Huntspill, Pulte, Monystead, and Wigborough, all in the county of Somerset.

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‘ In Mr. Locke's manuscripts we have the following account of the descent of the lands in the manor of Taunton held by the Fitzwarines:—“ The lands in Taunton held under the bishop of Winchester, by John, the Conqueror's porter, passed, with the heiress

of his family,<sup>1</sup> to Thomas Cogan, (called Richard by Locke) whose grand-daughter married sir Fulke Fitzwarine, who had a daughter married to sir Richard Hankford, and he had two daughters, one married to Thomas Butler, the sixth earl of Ormond, and the other to William Bourchier, ancestor of the earls of Bath."

' Edward Bourchier, fourth earl of Bath, who died in 1636, left issue two daughters, his co-heirs, Dorothy and Anne. Dorothy, the elder, married Thomas lord Grey, who by her had Thomas second earl of Stamford, who in his own right was the representative of the family of Bonville, to whom had descended the lands granted by the Conqueror to Robert the constable; and, in right of his mother, the representative of the families of Bourchier, Hankford, Fitzwarine, and Cogan, through the heiresses of which families had descended the lands granted to John, the Conqueror's porter. These two parcels of land having thus become united in the person of Thomas, second earl of Stamford, were purchased in 1693, by James

<sup>1</sup> This was Mary, only daughter and heiress of Sir Richard de Wiggebere, lord of the manor of Wigborough, in the parish of South-Petherton. The manor of Wigborough was held by the above-mentioned John, and his descendants, who took the local name *de Wiggebere*, or *de Wigborough*, by the serjeanty of keeping the door of the king's hall or chamber. This serjeanty continued from the time of William the Conqueror to the 23d of queen Elizabeth, for in that year John Broome is certified to hold the manor of Wigborough with its appurtenances, and lands in South-Petherton, of the king in chief, by the service of keeping the door of the king's chamber.—*Collinson's Hist. of Somerset*, vol. iii. p. 110.



Grove, esq. of the Inner Temple, serjeant at law, who had married Anne, his lordship's sister.

' Anne, the younger daughter and co-heiress of Edward Bouchier, fourth earl of Bath, was married to sir Chichester Wrey, bart. by whom she had sir Bouchier Wrey, and other children. By a deed of partition of the earl of Bath's estates between sir Bouchier Wrey, and the earl of Stamford, it appears that the latter obtained as his purparty the lands in the manor of Taunton, the manor of Huntspill, and other manors.

' The earl of Ormond's share of the Fitzwarine's lands came by an heiress to the family of St. Leger, the last of whom sold them to Henry Beecher, of whom they were purchased by Thomas Ansell, who, in 1616, sold them to Robert Henley, father of Andrew Henley, the first mayor of Taunton under the first charter, and sir Andrew Henley, the fifth in descent, in 1700, sold them to Charlton Whitlock, who died in 1704, and his trustees sold them to the lessees; but a mortgage of four thousand pounds to Henry Partridge having lain dormant, or secreted, the purchasers were obliged to advance thirteen shillings and four-pence in the pound, in addition to their purchase money, as the redemption of the mortgage, and from this period, and probably on this account, the endowment of Henley's alms-house hath been withheld, and not since paid.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Locke's Manuscripts in the possession of Mr. Josiah Easton of Bradford.

# **GENEALOGICAL TABLE,**

**SHewing THE DESCENT OF THE LANDS OF ROBERT THE CONSTABLE,  
IN THE FAMILIES OF BONVILLE AND GREY.**

Sir William de Bonville, knt.  
died 1408,—8th Henry IV.

John de Bonville,  
died in his father's life-time.

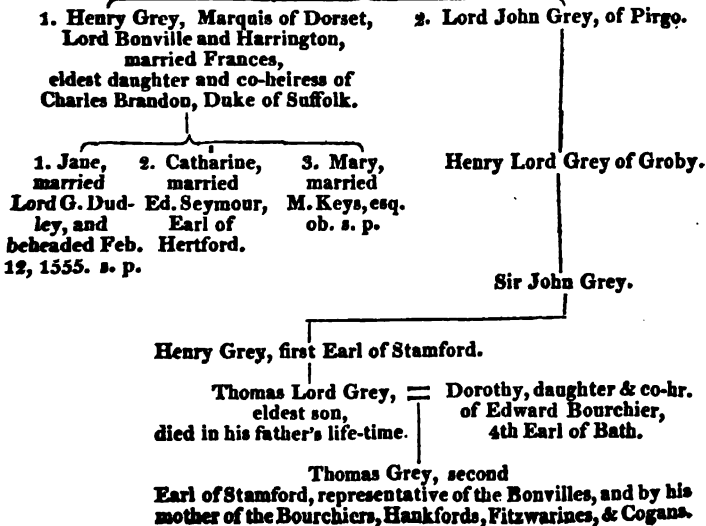
Sir William de Bonville, knt. }  
Lord Bonville, of Chewton,  
beheaded at St. Alban's, 39th Henry VI.  
married Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Meriet,  
Lord of the manors of Combe-Flory and Hestercombe.

William de Bonville,  
married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of  
William Lord Harrington, and  
died in his father's life-time.

William de Bonville, Lord Harrington,  
in right of his mother,  
married Catharine, daughter of Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury,  
killed at the battle of Wakefield, 39th Henry VI.  
in his father's and grand-father's life-time.

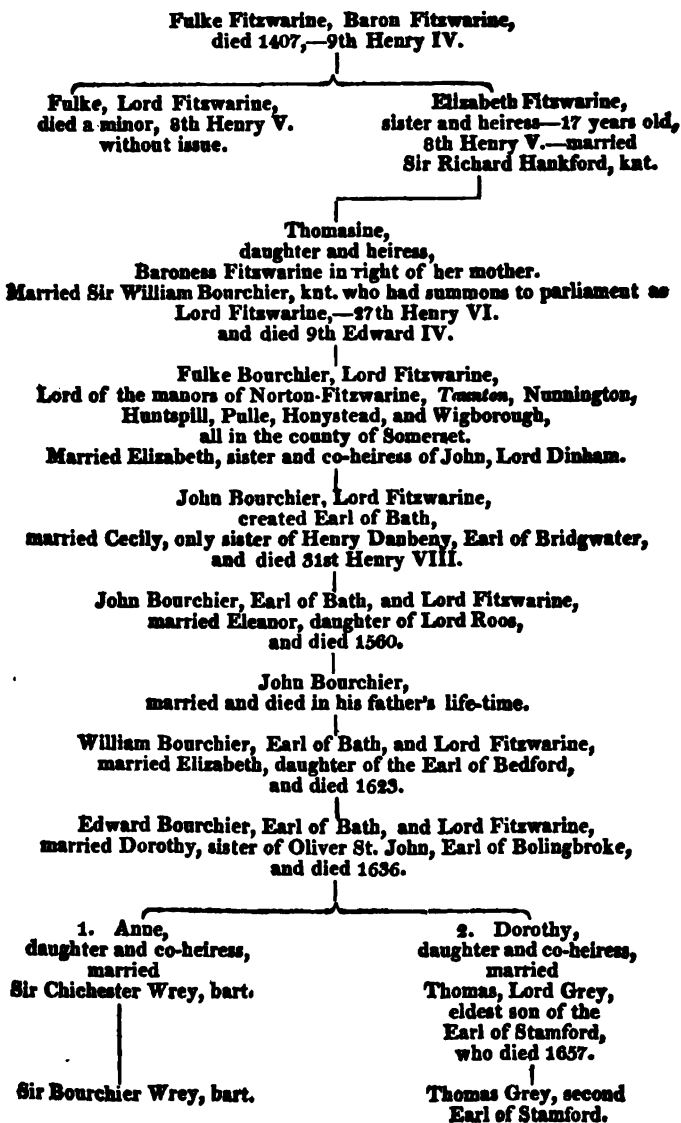
Cecilia de Bonville, daughter and heiress,  
succeeded her great grand-father as  
Baroness Bonville and Harrington.  
She married Thomas Grey, Marquess of Dorset,  
and died 19th Henry VIII.

Thomas, Marquess of Dorset, Lord Bonville and Harrington;  
married Margaret, daughter of Sir Robert Wotton,  
and died 1530.



# GENEALOGICAL TABLE,

SHewing THE DESCENT OF THE LANDS OF JOHN THE PORTER, IN THE  
FAMILIES OF FITZWARINE AND BOURCHIER.



## THE PRIORY.

In a review of the ancient state of the town of Taunton, we can by no means overlook the religious institutions, which owed their origin to the sentiments of the times, and to the establishment of which, many bishops of Winchester, as of other sees, consecrated their wealth. A monastic life is supposed indeed to have particularly suited the serious and gloomy temper of the English nation, as it made a most rapid progress in these kingdoms, and retained its first fervour here longer than in any other country; upon this account England is said to have merited the appellation of the *Isle of Saints*. The reign of king Stephen was distinguished by the great number of monasteries, both of monks and nuns, established in it.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1127, a few years before Stephen ascended the throne, William Giffard, bishop of Winchester, built and endowed a priory<sup>2</sup> in this town for canons regular of the order of Saint Augustine.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grosley's *Observations on England*, translated by Nugent, vol. I. p. 321, note, and p. 323. T.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Giffard endowed this priory with so much of St. James's parish as lies within the town of Taunton, together with all the lands on the north and east of it, quite to the river Tone and West-Monkton.—*Locke's MSS.*

<sup>3</sup> The canons regular of St. Austin lived together in common under one roof, and were bound by rules, though much less severe than those by which the monks were governed.

It is said that canons were brought into England so early as the seventh century; if so, then secular canons only can be meant; no regular canons were here till about the reign of king Henry I. when Rymer says, they had a house at Nostell in Yorkshire, and were

It was situated on the north side of the town, without the east-gate; and seems to have stood in a direct line with St. James's-street, about sixty yards from the spot, on which the new farm-house called the Priors stands. Near to this site is a street called Canon-street, and there have lately been discovered in it the ruins of large gothic arches and hewn stones.<sup>1</sup> This monastery was dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. It was so much improved and increased by the successor of William Giffard, Henry de Blois, brother of king Stephen, that he came in for an equal share of honour as the founder of it.<sup>2</sup>

But the exclusive claim of William Giffard to be considered in this light, was ascertained by an

brought thither by Adulphus, that monarch's confessor, that is, not till 1114.

On comparing the accounts of various writers, as Somner, Stevens, Stowe, and others, it would appear that Rymer's is the most correct, though Grose is inclined to place the introduction of regular canons about the year 1105. Stevens says that, "though there were regular canons who embraced the rules prescribed, (as particularly at Rheims in 1067,) yet the canons did not make regular vows till the twelfth century." It is added that they took not on them the name of regular canons of St. Austin, till Innocent II. so ordained it at the Lateran council in 1139. But after all, as Tanner has observed, it was so common to call collegiate canons *Canonici Regulares*, to distinguish them from the parochial clergy, that here, as in most disputed points, the contest might arise from mere misunderstanding. There were one hundred and seventy-five houses of this order, including canonesses.

<sup>1</sup> Locke's MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Taunton. Prior. Canon. Reg. S. Aug. Bathon. Diocesis. Gul. Giffarde et Henry Blezance (Blesensis), Episcopi Wintonienses, fundatores.—Leland's Collectanea, vol. i. p. 81. T.

inquisition<sup>1</sup> taken on oath before the king's escheators, at Taunton, in the 10th year of the reign of king Edward II. 1316. And by a charter of confirmation,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [*Esc. 10 Ed. 2. n. 172.*]

De prima fundatione ejusdem.

Inquisicio capta coram Escaetoribus domini Regis apud Taunton sexto die Januarii, anno regni Regis Edwardi decimo, utrum, viz. Prioratus de Taunton sit de fundatione progenitorum domini Regis quondam Regum Angliæ, seu progenitoris ipsius Regis an aliorum, seu alterius; et quorum, et cujus, et de quibus terris et tenementis, et à quo tempore; per sacramentum Johannis Hortherd, &c. Qui dicunt per sacramentum suum, quod Prioratus de Taunton non est de fundatione progenitorum domini Regis Regum Angliæ, seu progenitoris alicujus Regis, sed dicunt quod prædictus prioratus est de fundatione cujusdam Willielmi Giffard quondam episcopi Wynton, *ante tempus*<sup>1</sup> Regis Edmundi Iryneside, à tempore de quo, non extat memoria, de totâ terrâ suâ in parte aquilonari extra portam orientalem villæ suæ de Tauntone, ad construendum ibidem monasterium et situm suum, per bundas et divisas in cartâ ejusdem episcopi contentas et nominatas, in puram et perpetuam eleemosinam: Quas quidem fundationem et donationem Henr. Rex Angliæ et Dux Norm. et Aquit. et Comes Andeg. per cartam suam confirmavit in puram et perpetuam eleemosinam, sicut in cartâ prædicti episcopi de fundatione et donatione prædictis plenius continetur. Et dicunt, quod dictus prioratus nullas terras seu tenementa habet de fundatione seu donatione cujuscumq; progenitoris Regis Angliæ, seu progenitorum quorumcunq; Regum Angliæ. In cujus rei testimonium prædicti jurati huic inquisitioni sigilla sua apposuerunt.—*Dugd. Monast. tom. ii. p. 83.*

<sup>2</sup> [*Cart. 8 Ed. 3. n. 12. per Inspex.*]

Carta regis Edwardi tertii donatorum concessionem recitans et confirmans.

Henricus rex Angliæ, et dux Norm. et Aquit. et comes Andeg.

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<sup>1</sup> Error hic est maximus; nam iste Will. Gyffard consecratus fuit in Episc. Wint. a. 1107. 8 H. 1.

which passed in the reign of Henry the second, reciting the foundation of the priory and the subsequent

Archiepiscopis, &c. salutem. Sciatis me concessisse, et imperpetuam eleemosinam confirmasse Deo et ecclesie Tantonie, et canonicis ibidem Deo servantibus, omnes donationes quæ eis rationabiliter factæ sunt.

Ex dono Willielmi episcopi, fundatoris ejusdem ecclesie, omnes ecclesias Tantonie cum capellis, et omnibus pertinentiis suis, et terram de *Blakedona*, et ecclesiam de *Kingestona* cum capellis et pertinentiis suis; ecclesiam de *Lydyard*, cum pertinentiis suis; ecclesiam de *Legha*, cum pertinentiis suis; ecclesiam de *Hilla*, cum pertinentiis suis.

Ex dono Henrici Episcopi, ecclesiam de *Pypemynstra*, cum pertinentiis suis, et cum capellis.

Ex dono Roberti Arundelli, duas hidas terræ apud Aissam, et ecclesiam ejusdem villæ, cum pertinentiis suis.

Ex dono Willielmi filii Odonis, terram de Wildelanda, et ecclesiam ejusdem villæ, cum pertinentiis suis, consensu Willielmi nepotis et heredis ipsius, sicut carta sua testatur.

Ex dono Willielmi de Moïoun, terram de Lydiard.

Ex dono Ricardi de Turbervilla, concessu Hugonis fratris sui, ecclesiam de Dubertono, et terram de Golialanda.

Ex dono Rogeri Britonis, terram de Uppecota.

Ex dono Baldwini de Cumba, terram de Mora.

Ex dono Galfredi Foliot, unam virgatam terræ et dimidiam in terra de Stanton.

Ex dono Osberti et Gaufridi de Hidona, terram de Middledona.

Ex dono Baldwini de Cumba, xvi acras.

Ex dono Hugonis de Flury, viginti acras terræ in Hestercumba.

Quare volo, &c. Testibus Ricardo London, et Nigello Eliensi, et Roberto Lincolnensi, episcopis; Thoma cancellario; Roberto comite Lagecestræ; Will. comite Glouc. &c. *Dugd. Mon. tom. ii. p. 83.*

The year in which this charter was granted to the canons of Taunton, by which their possessions were confirmed to them by king Henry II. may be nearly ascertained from the names of the witnesses.—It could not be later than 1163, for in that year Richard

grants made to it, it appears, that the endowment of it, when first established by the founder, consisted of all the churches of Taunton, with their chapels and all their appurtenances, the manor of Blagdon, the church of Kingston with its chapels and appurtenances, the church of Bishop's-Lydeard, the church of Anger's-Leigh, and the church of Bishop's-Hull, with their respective appurtenances; and that Henry de Blois, the successor of William Giffard, augmented this endowment by a grant of the church of Pitminster with its chapels and appurtenances.

This priory had also many considerable benefactors.

William lord Mohun, in the reign of Henry I. soon after the foundation, gave to the canons of this house the manor of Lydeard in Wiltshire.

William Montacute, earl of Salisbury, granted to it the manor and hundred of Dulverton, with all the appurtenances belonging to it, to hold in fee-farm at the yearly rent of ten pounds, which demise is dated in the chapter-house of the priory of Taunton, March 18th, 11 Edward III.<sup>1</sup>

de Beaumis, bishop of London, one of the witnesses, died; nor earlier than 1157, for in that year Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, another of the witnesses, was appointed chancellor.

<sup>1</sup> [*Pat. 11. Ed. 3. p. 1. m. 12. per Inspex.*]

*Dimissio Manerii de Dulverton canonicis de Taunton ad feodi firmam per Will. de Monteacuto comitem Sarum.*

*Per hoc scriptum indentatum cunctis appareat evidenter, quod nobilis vir Willielmus de Monteacuto comes Sarum concessit, et ad feodi firmam dimisit, et hoc scripto suo indentato confirmavit, Religiosis viris priori et conventui de Taunton, manerium et hundredum de Dulverton cum pertinentiis; habendum et tenendum eisdem priori et conventui et eorum successoribus, unà cum libertatibus regalibus ac aliis liberis consuetudinibus, et aliis quibus-*



Robert Arundel<sup>1</sup> added the church of Ash, with two hides of land.

cunq; ad prædicta manerium et hundredum cum pertinentiis spectantibus seu pertinentibus, imperpetuum ; Reddendo inde eidem comiti, hæredibus et suis assignatis, decem libras sterlingorum per annum ad duos anni terminos ; viz. ad Festa Pasche et S. Michaelis, equalibus porcionibus, &c.

Dat. in capitulo dicti prioratus de Tanton, xviii. die Marcii, anno regni domini regis Edwardi tertii, a conquestu xi.—*Dugd. Mon. tom. ii. p. 83.*

<sup>1</sup> In the time of Edward the Confessor, Ash was a part of the manor of Bishops-Lydeard, and belonged to the church of Wells. It was afterwards taken from Giso, bishop of Wells, by Harold, earl of Kent and Wessex, afterwards king, and at his death, became vested in William the Conqueror, in whom it remained till he gave it to Roger Arundel, one of his attendants into England. In Domesday-Book, at the end of the account of the possessions of the church of Wells, it is said that Roger Arundel holds Ash of the king unjustly.

This Roger de Arundel was the third son of Roger de Montgomery, upon whom the Conqueror bestowed the earldoms of Arundel and Shrewsbury, and took his name from the castle of Arundel, his father's residence. He was afterwards better known by the name of Roger de Poictou, or Roger Pictaviensis. He was a great benefactor to the clergy. He took part with his brother Robert de Belesme, earl of Shrewsbury, in the great rebellion against king Henry the first, on behalf of Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, and was on that account banished England.

In Domesday-Book he is put down as possessing one hundred and eighty-eight manors in Lancashire ; seventy-six in Yorkshire ; three in Essex ; fifty-nine in Suffolk ; eleven in Nottinghamshire ; seven in Derbyshire ; ten in Norfolk ; forty-four in Lincolnshire ; and twenty-eight in Somersetshire.

By his wife, who was a lady of Poictou, he had issue two sons, Gilbert, the elder, from whom descended in a direct line the present lord Arundel of Wardour ; and Robert his second son, who in the time of king Stephen, on the collection of Dane-geld, paid fifty-

William Fitz-Odo, with the consent of William his grandson and heir, gave the manor of Wildeland, with the church and its appurtenances.

Richard de Turberville, with the consent of his brother Hugh, gave the church of Dulverton, and the manor of Tolland.

Roger Brito<sup>1</sup> the manor of Upcot.

eight shillings for the lands he held in the countties of Dorset and Wilts. He had, by the gift of his father, the manor of Ash, which he conferred upon the canons of Taunton.

In the 13th of king John, upon collecting the scutage of Wales, Robert Fitzpaine paid thirty marks for fifteen knight's fees of the old fees of Roger Arundel. (*Dugd. Bar.* vol. i. p. 372.) This will in some measure account for the statement in the Wells register, that the family of Fitzpaine were patrons of the priory of Taunton in 1317.

The canons had a house in the village of Ash, the ruins of which were taken down within the last forty years. Ash had the additional name of *Prior's*, from the manor belonging to the prior of Taunton, and to distinguish it from another manor in the same parish called Ash-Herbert's.—*Dugdale's Baronage*, vol. i. p. 32.—*Collins's Peerage*, by Brydges, vol. vii. p. 40.—*Collinson's Hist. of Somerset*, vol. ii. p. 497.

<sup>1</sup> The family of *Brito* (sometimes called *Bret*) had their residence at Sandford, a village in the neighbourhood of Watchet, since called from them Sandford-Bret. In the reign of king Henry I. the manor of Sandford was held by Simon Bret, of the honour of Dunster, by the service of half a knight's fee. This Simon had two sons, Richard, who was called *Brito*, and Edmund, who, from this village, took the local name *de Sandford*.

Richard, the elder son, being one of the principals concerned in the murder of archbishop Becket, Maud his daughter, formerly the wife of one Gerard, but then married to Robert de Ouvre, became in consequence a great benefactress to the priory of Woodspring, at that time founded by Robert de Courtenay to the honour

Baldwin de Combe' the manor of More, and sixteen acres of land.

Geoffrey Foliot a virgate and a half of land in the manor of Stanton.

Osbert and Geoffrey de Hidon the manor of Middleton ; and

Hugh de Flory twenty acres of land in Hestercombe.

Besides these donations, William of Wykeham bequeathed to the prior and convent of Taunton one hundred marks to pray for his soul.<sup>2</sup> And Jasper Tudor, earl of Bedford and Pembroke, half-brother of king Henry the sixth, gave orders by his will that his body should be buried in this monastery, and that a monument, suitable to his rank, should be erected over it ; bequeathing forty pounds per annum, out of his lands, for four priests to sing perpetually for the weal of his soul. He died in 1497.<sup>3</sup>

of the said St. Thomas of Canterbury, giving thereto several parcels of land in Sandford, Bicknoller, and other places.

The surname of *Brito* was assumed by several of the leaders in the Conqueror's army, who came over in the retinue of the earl of Britany, to denote the country of which they were natives. In Domesday-Book many persons of this name are mentioned, as Alured Brito, Joscelin Brito, Magnus Brito, Ogerius Brito, Raimald Brito, Tihel Brito, and Waldin Brito.

<sup>1</sup> This Baldwin de Combe was the owner of, and resided at Combe, now Combe-Flory. He was succeeded by Hugh de Flory, and he by Ranulph de Flory, from whom the village of Combe received its additional denomination.

<sup>2</sup> Lowth's *Life of William of Wykeham*, p. 204. T.

<sup>3</sup> Locke's MSS.—Collinson (*Hist. of Somerset*, vol. iii. p. 236.) says, " It has been asserted that the earl of Pembroke ordered his

The priory of Taunton had, in 1293, lands in Thorne (now Thorne-Falcon,) valued, in pope Nicholas's taxation, at fifteen shillings per annum; in Preston, near Milverton, ten shillings; Ash-Priors, one hundred shillings; Ninehead, twenty-five shillings; West-Monkton, ten shillings; Lydeard-Saint-Lawrence, twenty shillings; North-Petherton, twenty shillings; Bridgwater, ten shillings; Spaxton, thirteen shillings and four-pence; Strington, nine shillings; Halsewell, ten shillings; Dulverton, twenty-six shillings; Stoke, thirty shillings. Lands in Thurloxtton were appropriated to the pitancier of the priory.<sup>1</sup>

‘The canons of this order wore their beards; their habit was a black cassock, over which was a white rochet, with a black cloak and hood, and a cap on the head.

In 1339 there were twenty-five canons belonging to this foundation.<sup>2</sup>

‘In 1397, the prior of Taunton lent fifty marks to king Richard the second.’

body to be buried in this priory; but Keynsham was in reality the monastery wherein he appointed his interment, and where his remains were accordingly deposited.”

<sup>1</sup> From the archives of the cathedral church of Wells, communicated by the Rev. J. Collinson. T.

In the 4th of Edward III. the prior of Taunton held the manor of Thurloxtton of John de Mohun, of Dunster, by the service of one knight's fee.—*Inq. post mort. Joh. de Mohun, 4 Edw. III.*—*Collinson's Hist. of Somerset*, vol. ii. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> From the archives of the cathedral of Wells, communicated by the Rev. J. Collinson. T.

<sup>3</sup> De obligationibus, super mutuo regi facto, 21 Ric. II. Prior de Taunton, de quinquaginta marcis.—*Rymer, Fœdera, tom. viii. fo. 12.*

‘ In 1444, the revenues of this priory were valued at one hundred and forty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four-pence.

‘ The successive bishops of Winchester were patrons of this priory, and the priors were summoned to the convocation. Dr. Hutton, on the authority of the Wells registers, states that in the year 1317, Sir Robert Fitzpaine, knight, was the patron of this monastery.

In the 24th year of Henry VIII. a small monastery or priory of canons regular of St. Augustine, at Stavordale, in this county, was united to the monastery of Taunton.

‘ The priory of Stavordale is situate about three miles from Wincanton, and was founded in the reign of Henry III. by Richard Lovel, lord of the manor of Wincanton, for canons of the order of St. Augustine, and the regulation of St. Victor. This priory was dedicated to St. James, and endowed with lands in Wincanton, Prestley, Rackington, Eastrepe, Cuttlesham, Thorn-Coffin, and other places in this county, and in Buckham-Weston, in the county of Dorset.

‘ In the 24th of Edward III. 1349, it was found that it would not be to the king’s damage to grant licence to Sir Richard Lovel, knt. to grant to the prior and convent of Stavordale a messuage, mill, two carucates of arable land, twelve acres of meadow, twelve acres of pasture, ten acres of wood, and the rent of one pound of pepper, with appurtenances in Prestley, to find a chaplain to say divine service, every day, in the priory church of Stavordale, for the good estate of the said Richard while living, and for his soul after his decease ; and for the souls of his father and mother, and all his ancestors, and all the faithful deceased.

The priors of this house were,

Robert, 1263.

Robert de Charleton, died in February, 1309.

Walter de Etone, resigned August 13th, 1322.

William de Nimesfeld was confirmed August 29th, 1322. He died in 1333; and, after his death, Richard Lovel, lord of Castle-Cary, and patron of the priory, gave licence to the canons to elect a prior. They accordingly elected

Henry de Nimesfeld, July 21st, 1333.

John Pense, Oct. 29th, 1418. He died in October, 1440.

William Pointington, November 5th, 1440.

Andrew Grey, September 22d, 1502.

John Legge, Sept. 15th, 1508. He resigned in 1513.

Richard Crue, canon of Brewton, August 11th, 1513. He was prior in 1533, when this convent was united to the priory of Taunton.

‘The old church, which sometime served for the conventual one, was esteemed to be the mother church to Wincanton. This falling into ruins, a new one was built by Sir John Stourton, knt. and consecrated June 4th, 1443.

‘In the year 1409, Ela, the widow of Sir Richard de St. Maur, the elder, by her will, directed that her body should be buried in the new chapel of this priory, next to the grave of the said Sir Richard de St. Maur, her husband. There were also buried in this church, Nicholas and John de St. Maur, and many of the family of the Zouches, one of whom founded a chantry here, the last incumbent of which, Robert Gulne, received in 1553 a pension of five pounds.

‘This priory is now converted into a farm-house and barn. Near the east end, at the springing of some arches, are armorial shields, bearing as follows; 1st, ten bezants, a canton *ermine*, Zouch, impaling quarterly, first and fourth, two chevrons, *gules*, St. Maur; second and third, a lion rampant, Lovel; 2d, Zouch, singly; 3d, Zouch, impaling a cross moline.

‘The cross beams of the ceilings of the chambers are roughly carved at the intersections with foliage and other ornaments. In the barn, which was the chapel of the priory, are two good gothic arches, one twenty, the other thirty-five feet high; the timber work of the roof and cross beams carved. In the wall of the portal is a basin for holy water; and on the top a small turret with one bell.

Soon after the union of this religious house with the priory of Taunton, the storm broke out which involved all the religious houses in one ruin.<sup>1</sup> That in this town shared the common fate. In the 26th of Henry VIII. a commission was granted to John Clerk, bishop of Bath and Wells, sir William Stourton, knight, Hugh Powlet, William Portman, and Roger Kynsey, to take the value of the lands belonging to this monastery. They reported the clear annual value to be, according to Dugdale, two hundred and eighty-six pounds, eight shillings and ten-pence; but according to Speed, four hundred and thirty-eight pounds, nine shillings and ten-pence, including the priory of Stavordale, recently annexed to it.<sup>2</sup>

‘Leland, who saw this priory just before its dissolution, takes notice of the following books in the library of the canons, namely *Chronicon Ivonis*, Philaretus de Pulsibus, and Theophilus de Urinis.

<sup>1</sup> The destruction of these religious institutions, it may be easily conceived, brought an immense sum into the coffers of the king. The net annual income of the religious houses in the county of Somerset only, was seven thousand four hundred eighty-seven pounds eighteen shillings and seven-pence half-penny. This estimate may be supposed to be much beneath the full value, for the estates were let on low terms, the clergy taking five pounds rent for a farm worth fifty pounds yearly. A vast treasure also arose from the gold, silver, precious stones, and furniture, found in these repositories of pious munificence. The bullion, in gold and silver, discovered in the single abbey of St. Edmundsbury, amounted to five thousand marks.—*Stevens's Historical Account of Taxes*, p. 203, 214.—*Acta Regia*, vol. iii. p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Bacon's Liber Regis.

‘ As the canons had a library, it may be presumed that they had also a *scriptorium* or writing-room, attached to it, where their music and missals, the works of the fathers, and other religious books, the latin classics, and such literary works as they could obtain were copied. By means of these *scriptoria*, the monks, particularly the benedictines, compiled and preserved the first annals of Saxon history, without which, however strange and rude the composition of some of them may appear to modern readers, this would have now been a land of darkness, as to any account of what had passed therein during former ages.

‘ In foreign monasteries, the boys and novices were chiefly occupied in copying music ; but the missals and bibles were ordered to be written by monks of mature age and discretion. The *scriptorium* of St. Alban’s abbey was built by abbot Paulin, a Norman, who ordered many volumes to be written there, about the year 1080. Archbishop Lanfranc furnished the copies to be transcribed. Estates were often granted for the support of the *scriptorium* ; that at St. Edmundsbury was endowed with two mills, and in the year 1171, the tithes of a rectory were appropriated to the cathedral convent of St. Swithin of Winchester, *ad libros transcribendos*. Many instances of this species of benefaction occur from the tenth century. Nigel in the year 1160, gave the monks of Ely, two churches, *ad libros faciendos*.

‘ This employment of copying manuscripts appears to have been diligently practised at Croyland ; for Ingulphus relates, that when the library of that convent was burned in the year 1091, seven hundred volumes were consumed. Fifty-eight volumes were transcribed at Glastonbury, during the government of one abbot, about the year 1300. And in the library of this monastery, the richest in England, there were in the year 1248, upwards of four hundred volumes. More than eighty books were transcribed for St. Alban’s abbey, by Abbot Whethamstede, who died about 1400. At the foundation of Winchester college, by William of Wykeham, about 1393, one or more transcribers were hired and employed by the founder to *make books* for the library. They transcribed and took their commons within the college, as appears by computations of expenses on their account yet remaining.

‘ In the monastery of Ely, the precentor or chantor, was the



principal librarian, and had within his office, the *scriptorium*, where writers were employed in transcribing books for the library, and missals and other books used in divine service. This officer furnished the vellum, parchment, paper, ink, colours, gum, and other necessities for limners, used in illuminating their books; and leather, and other implements for binding, and keeping them in repair.

‘Some of the Roman classics were copied in the English monasteries at a very early period. Henry, a benedictine monk of Hyde abbey, near Winchester, transcribed in the year 1178, Terence, Suetonius, and Claudian, and also Boethius; of these he formed one volume, illuminating the initials, and forming the brazen bosses of the covers with his own hands; but this monk had more devotion than taste, for he exchanged this manuscript a few years afterwards for four missals, the legend of St. Christopher, and St. Gregory’s “Pastoral Care,” with the prior of the neighbouring cathedral convent. Benedict, abbot of Peterborough, author of the Latin Chronicle of king Henry the second, amongst a great variety of scholastic and theological treatises, transcribed Seneca’s epistles and tragedies, Terence, Martial, and Claudian, to which may be added “Gesta Alexandri,” about the year 1180.

‘In a catalogue of the books of the library of Glastonbury, we find Livy, Sallust, Seneca, Tully “de Senectute” and “Amicitia,” Virgil, Persius, and Claudian, in the year 1248. Among the royal manuscripts in the British museum, is one of the twelve books of Statius’s Thebaid, supposed to have been written in the tenth century, which once belonged to the cathedral convent of Rochester. And another of Virgil’s Eneid, written in the thirteenth, which came from the library of St. Austin’s, Canterbury. —Wallingford, abbot of St. Alban’s, gave or sold from the library of that monastery to Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham, a great collector of books, Terence, Virgil, Quintilian, and Jerome against Rufinus, together with thirty-two other volumes, valued at fifty pounds of silver.

‘The scarcity of parchment undoubtedly prevented the transcription of many other books in the writing-rooms of the monasteries. About the year 1120, one master Hugh, being appointed by the convent of Saint Edmundsbury in Suffolk, to write and

illuminate a grand copy of the bible for their library, could procure no parchment for this purpose in England. It is to this scarcity of parchment that we owe the loss and destruction of many valuable manuscripts of the ancients, which otherwise might have been preserved. The venerable fathers who employed themselves in erasing the writing of some of the best works of the most eminent Greek or Latin authors, for the purpose of transcribing upon the obliterated parchment or vellum, the lives of saints or legendary tales, possibly mistook these lamentable depredations for works of piety. The ancient fragment of the ninety-first book of Livy, discovered by Mr. Burns, in the Vatican, in 1772, was found to be much defaced in this respect by the pious labours of some well-intentioned monk.

‘ We return from this digression to the thread of our history :—

Ecton, in his *Thesaurus*, says that there belonged to Taunton priory the gift of the impropriate tithes of the following nineteen parishes; that is to say, Taunton-Saint-Mary-Magdalen, to which belonged six chapels of ease, namely, Taunton-Saint-James, Ruishton, Trull, Wilton, Stoke-Saint-Mary, and Thurlbeer; Kingston, with Cotheleston, a chapel of ease; Pitminster, with Corfe, a chapel of ease; Bishop’s-Hull, Ninehead, Ash-Priors, Dulverton, Withiel, Otterford, Saint-Michael’s-Church, and Staplegrove, which last is a rectory, divided from Taunton, and made a separate parish, by act of parliament, in 1554.’

‘ The prior and convent had the presentation to the rectories of Combe-Flory, Lydeard-Saint-Lawrence, Runnington, and Thurloxton.—They had also the appropriate rectories of the following vicarages to which they presented, namely, Kingston, Cotheleston, Ninehead, Withiel-Flory, Pitminster, Corfe, Otterford, Ash-Priors, and Saint Mary Magdalen in Taunton,

‘ Locke’s MSS.

with eight chapels belonging to it, namely, Saint James in Taunton, Bishop's-Hull, Ruishton, Stoke-Saint-Mary, Staplegrove, Thurlbeer, Trull, and Wilton.—The rectories of the before-mentioned parishes were entirely appropriated to them.

The church of St. Mary Magdalen was, originally, only a chapel dependant on the conventual church. There were also three other chapels, namely, St. Margaret's, situate at the bottom of Eastreach ; St. Paul's, in the west part of the town, in the parish of Bishop's-Hull, the house now occupied by Edward Coles, esq. ; and St. Leonard's, in the north end of the town, in the parish of St. James.<sup>1</sup>

At the reformation the priory was possessed of certain lands, tenements, gardens, cottages, and burgages, with their appurtenances, situate without the gate of Canon-street, in Middle-street, and St. James's-street, in the several parishes of St. Mary Magdalen (as well within as without the borough) and St. James in Taunton, and West-Monkton, to the clear yearly value of six pounds, nineteen shillings, and seven-pence halfpenny, and also of lands, tenements, gardens, curtilages, cottages, or burgages, situate as well within as without the said gate of Canon-street, Middle-street, and St. James's-street, in the said parishes of St. Mary Magdalen, within the borough, St. James, and West-Monkton, to the clear annual value of twenty-nine pounds, twelve shillings, and four-pence.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tanner's Notitia Mon. and Grant of the Priory.

<sup>2</sup> From the deed, being the original grant of the lands belonging to the priory, in the possession of William Kinglake, esq. of Taunton.

‘ On the fifteenth of September, 1534, William Willyams, prior; William Gregory, sub-prior; Anthony Whytt, and twelve other canons acknowledged king Henry VIII. as supreme head of the church.’ And on the twelfth of February, 1539, William Willyams, prior, surrendered the house to the king.<sup>1</sup>

The priory of Stavordale and all the lands belonging to it, were granted by Henry VIII. in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, to John, earl of Oxford. The lands at Blagdon, belonging to Taunton, were given to sir Thomas Davey, knt. one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber to Henry VIII. and Taunton priory, under the name of Taunton *nuper prioratus*, with sundry other lands, by a grant, which passed the great seal the fifth day of March, in the thirty-sixth year of Henry the eighth, in consideration of the sum of four

<sup>1</sup> Rymer—*Fædera*, tom. xiv. fo. 504.

<sup>2</sup> *Surrender of Taunton priory.*

Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos præsens scriptum pervenerit *Willielmus Willyams*, prior monasterii sive prioratus beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum de Taunton in com. Somers. Ordinis Sancti Augustini, et ejusdem loci *conventus* salutem, &c.

Noveritis nos, &c.

In cujus rei testimonium nos præfati prior et conventus sigillum nostrum commune præsentibus apponi fecimus.

Dat. in domo nostra capitulari de Taunton prædicta duodecimo dei mensis Februarii, anno regni Regis Henrici supradicti tricesimo.

Et memorandum quod die et anno prædictis venerunt prædicti prior et conventus in domo sua capitulari apud Taunton, coram *Johanne Tregonwell* virtute commissionis dicti domini Regis ei inde directæ, et recognoverunt scriptum prædictum ac omnia et singula in eodem contenta in forma prædicta.—*Rymer—Fædera*, tom. xiv. fo. 635.

hundred and twenty-nine pounds, fifteen shillings, and ten pence, paid to the treasurer of the chamber of surveyors-general of the king's lands, and the sum of eight hundred and seven pounds, sixteen shillings, and eight-pence, paid to the treasurer of the Court of Augmentations of the revenues of the crown, was given to William Chapleyn<sup>1</sup> and John Selwood, to be holden in free soccage, and not *in capite*, by fealty only, in lieu of all services, like the manor of Cansford, in the county of Dorset.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Among the records called "Originalia et Memoranda," on the lord treasurer's remembrancer's side of the exchequer, there is the following.—"Willielmo Chaplaine, and Jo. Selwood manerium de Pyworthy et alia 4 pars original. Anno 36 Henrici octavi, Rotulo 93—1545.

In this record, mention is made of some houses in Taunton, lands in Monkton and elsewhere, part of the possessions of Taunton priory, granted to Chaplaine and Selwood.

<sup>2</sup> The same conveyance included also the grant of the manor of Pyeworthy, in the county of Devon, together with the advowson of the rectory of Pyeworthy, late the property of Margaret, countess of Salisbury, attainted of high treason; of the manor of Wrangton in the said county, late the property of the priory of Plympton; of the manor and rectory of Buckingham, late the property of the abbey of Hartland; of the manor of Westcombeland, in the county of Somerset, late the property of the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, in England; and of a messuage and tenement, called Guyrt-grange, in the parish of Kyllynyock, in the county of Anglesea, late the property of the monastery of Conway. The clear yearly value of these lands stood thus, namely, of Pyeworthy, nineteen pounds eighteen shillings and eleven-pence half-penny; of Wrangton, six pounds fifteen shillings and six-pence half-penny; of Buckingham, seven pounds; of Westcombeland, eight pounds thirteen shillings and six-pence, and of Guyrt-grange, fifty shillings. The manor of Pyeworthy was to be held *in capite*,

‘ The manor of Taunton *nuper prioratus*, now commonly called “Chapleyn’s Holt,” from the name of the first grantee of the crown, comprizes nearly all the houses in the town-side of St. James’s parish, and divers lands in the parishes of West-Monkton, and St. Mary Magdalen in Taunton. It passed from Chapleyn to the families of Sweeting, and Rogers; and the manor now belongs to William Kinglake, of Taunton, esq.

‘ In the thirty-sixth of Henry VIII. 1545, the site of this priory, with its appurtenances, and lands in Taunton, Bishop’s-Hull, Staplegrove, Ruishton, Trull, Corfe, Pitminster, Hill-Farrance, Norton, Kingston, and Cheddon, was granted to sir Francis Brian and Matthew Colthurst, and the heirs of the said Matthew, to be held of the king in chief, by the service of the twentieth part of a knight’s fee.’

‘ The site of the priory, with the adjoining farm was sold by Colthurst, in 1550, to Thomas More, esq.’

by the service of the twentieth part of a knight’s fee; and the annual sum of thirteen shillings and seven-pence, was to be paid for tenths, to the Court of Augmentations, for the manor of Wrangton; fourteen shillings for Buckingham; seventeen shillings and four-pence for Westcombeland; and five shillings for Guytgrange.—*From the deed before quoted in the possession of William Kinglake, esq. T.*

<sup>1</sup> Among the records called “Originalia et Memoranda,” in the Court of Exchequer, there is—Francesco Brian, Militi, et Mattheo Colthurst, situs prioratus de Taunton, et alia concessa in comitatu Somerset, 6 pars original. Anno 36 Henrici, octavi, Rotulo 25.—1545.

<sup>2</sup> In the rolls office there is the licence of alienation, from Colthurst to More, of the site of Taunton Priory, &c.—Pat. 3d Edw. VI. 1550.

and it descended maternally to the family of Bickham, of whom it was purchased about 17. . by Philip Winter, esq. the uncle of the present proprietor, John Winter, esq. of Bishop's-Lydeard.

Justice and policy seemed to require that some proportion, at least, of the riches, which had been thus wrested from the public and religious uses, should be applied again to some purposes of general utility and piety. Henry VIII. accordingly endowed some new sees, and provided others with suffragan bishops. But notwithstanding these and some other provisions made for foundations consecrated to religion, or devoted to literature, the royal coffers were enriched by sales and grants of the estates belonging to monasteries. These alienations were made for sums much below the real value of the lands; and the opportunity of making very advantageous purchases more easily reconciled the people to the violation of what had before been deemed sacred property.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The alienations of monasteries do not appear to have been made by any regular principles; but to have depended on the present humour of a capricious king, who sometimes exchanged the abbey lands for other lands inferior in quality and cultivation; sometimes staked them at play; and at other times gave them away, without thought, or as a reward for the most trivial service. He transferred a religious house of some value, to a woman, because she had presented him with a dish of puddings, that pleased his palate; one gentleman obtained a grant of a priory, without its being known, at the time, on one side what was solicited, or on the other side what was granted. He was the son of sir Philip Champenon, of Modbury, in Devon, and resided at court. On a day when two or three other gentlemen, who had posts at court, were waiting at a door, through which the king was to pass, with a petition, requesting the grant of certain abbey lands, specified in

• The king to induce the secular clergy to countenance his sacrilegious rapacity, made great promises of the spoils, and especially that the first fruits and tenths which previously to the reformation were paid to the pope, should be wholly abolished, and they were abolished accordingly, but as soon as he had accomplished his purpose, he revived the first fruits and tenths, and appropriated them to the augmentation of the royal revenue. The clergy therefore, as a body, received no advantage from the reformation, and their establishment was certainly at least on as firm a basis before, as it has been since, that measure. Indeed the clergy soon discovered the danger to which the reformation had exposed them. New sects sprung up controverting the doctrines and discipline of the reformed church, and assailing episcopacy itself. The clergy would have gladly returned to the authority, which restrained such alarming innovations, but the possessions of the religious houses

it, Mr. Champernon met with them, and was inquisitive to know their suit, which they were as careful to preserve a secret. The king, making his appearance, they fell on their knees, and presented their petition. Mr. Champernon, confident that courtiers would not beg any thing hurtful to themselves, joined them in the suit; which was immediately granted. They returned thanks, and so did Mr. Champernon. He afterwards demanded his share in the grant; which the others refused. On this he made his appeal to the king, who established his claim by avowing an equal meaning in his largesse. On this decision the other gentlemen granted him the priory of St. Germain's, in Cornwall, valued at two hundred and forty-three pounds eight shillings, yearly rent; which, by him, or his heirs, was afterwards sold to Mr. Eliot.—*Fuller's Church History of Britain*, book vi. p. 317.



then in the hands of the leading men of the times rendered their frequent attempts ineffectual.

‘ The possessions of the dissolved monasteries were an incumbrance to the crown for many years. The cautious would not purchase on any terms, from a persuasion that they would be soon restored, and the moral and truly religious would not accept a gratuitous grant of them. The king therefore sold them for a mere trifle, or lavished them on his courtiers, his favourites, and even on his menials. The founder of the house of Bedford was in obscurity until this period. He obtained a grant of the monastery of Tavistock, with all its possessions, and of Woburn, and other immense estates ; and many of the gentry of England, who pride themselves on their ancestry, owe the origin of their great estates to these sacrilegious times.

#### PRIORS OF TAUNTON.

‘ The names of the priors of Taunton that have occurred are as under :—

Stephen, 1175, 1189.

John, 1313.

Stephen de Pycoteston succeeded about 1315. He died in 1325.

Richard de Colmstoke, elected 1325.

Ralph de Colmstoke, 1331. He resigned March 22d, 1338.

Robert de Messingham was elected April 19th, 1339. There were then twenty-four canons present in the convent.

Thomas Cok, or le Cock, April 8th, 1346.

Thomas de Pederton, died 1361.

Walter de Gretley, elected 1361.

Walter Coke, died January, 1407.

Robert Newton succeeded January 18th, 1407.  
He died August 12th, 1431.

Thomas Ufcoln was elected September 14th, 1431.  
Fourteen canons were then in the convent.

Thomas Bennet, prior of this house, was, in 1438,  
summoned to the council of Florence.

Richard Glene, elected in 1448; was summoned to  
the convocation, in 1449. He died January 31st, 1473.

John Ayshent, succeeded February 28th, 1473.  
Fifteen canons were then in the house.

John Prowse, occurs 1492. He resigned in 1513.

Nicholas Peper was elected February 23d, 1513,  
when thirteen canons were present, and three absent.  
He died September 26th, 1523.

William York, B. D. canon of Brewton, was  
nominated by Cardinal Wolsey, October 27th, 1523.  
Twelve canons were then present, and one absent.

William Williams was the last prior, and with  
twelve canons surrendered the priory to the king,  
February 10th, 1539, being allowed a pension of sixty  
pounds per annum, and a gratuity of thirty pounds.

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‘ In 1553 there remained in charge six pounds, thir-  
teen shillings, and four-pence, in fees, and thirty-nine  
pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence, in annuities;  
and the following pensions, namely,

To William Baylie, six pounds, thirteen shillings,  
and four-pence.

Nicholas Besam, six pounds.

John Warren, five pounds, six shillings, and eight-  
pence.

John Hayward, five pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence.

John Cockerham, five pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence. \*

William Persons, five pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence,

And to William Brynsmede, five pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence.

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‘ An annuity of £—— is yet paid by the crown to the parish of Taunton-Saint-James, and was no doubt intended as a provision for the poor that were subsisted at the gates of the monastery, where real distress was sure of relief, charity being the main principle of these pious institutions.

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**‘ GENEALOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE FAMILY OF  
MORE, OF THE PRIORY IN TAUNTON.**

In the year 1550, Matthew Colthurst, to whom king Henry the eighth granted the Priory of Taunton, &c. sold the same to Thomas More, esq. descended from the family of More of Bagborough. Mr. More resided in a house called the Priory, in Taunton, where he died in the year 1576, and was buried in the church of Saint Mary Magdalen, on the south-side of the communion-table, where there is a table monument erected to his memory, with many coats of arms, and the following inscription:—“ Thomas More, of the Pryory of Taunton, esquier, hear lying, departed this lyfe the 28th day of March, anno d’ni, 1576, and had two wyfes, by the first he left lyving Robert, Gefrey, Francis, Johan, by the second Jesper and Florence, and blest them all.”

His first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of John Constable, by whom he had

1. Robert More, of Hawkchurch, in the county of Dorset, esq. who married the daughter of ——— Bond, of Purbeck, in the county of Dorset, and died without issue.

2. Geoffrey More, died without issue.

3. Francis More, of the Priory in Taunton, married Grace, daughter of John St. Albyn of Alfoxton, in the county of Somerset, esq. by whom he had two sons, Francis, who died in the lifetime of his father, and Thomas, of whom presently.

Thomas More, esq, first mentioned; married to his second wife Elizabeth, daughter of William Stukeley, by whom he had two children,

1. Sir Jasper More, of Heytesbury, in the county of Wilts, knt. high sheriff of that county the twenty-fifth and forty-fifth of Elizabeth, and the first of James. He married Catharine, daughter of sir Thomas Packington, of Aylesbury, in the county of Buckingham, and died without issue, leaving Thomas, second son of his half-brother Francis, his heir.

2. Florence More, daughter, married first Edward Courtenay, son and heir of sir Pierce Courtenay, knt. and secondly, Humphrey Watson, of Bovey, esq.

We now come to Thomas More, esq. second son of Francis More, of the Priory in Taunton, esq. and Grace St. Albyn, his wife. He was heir to his father, and his uncles, Robert More, of Hawkchurch, esq. Geoffrey More, and sir Jasper More, knt.—and served the office of high sheriff of the county of Wilts, in the thirteenth of James the first. He died in 1623, and was buried at Heytesbury, under a monument in the church at that place, with the effigies of himself and his wife.—He married Rachel, daughter of sir John Wyndham, of Orchard-Wyndham, in the county of Somerset, knt. by whom he left issue, one son,

Thomas More, of Hawkchurch, in the county of Dorset, esq. afterwards of Sparkgrove, in the county of Somerset. He married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of sir John Bampfylde, of Poltimore, in the county of Devon, bart. and died in the year 1695. He had by this lady, one son,

1. Thomas More, esq. who died in the life-time of his father, without issue,

And five daughters,

2. Bridget, who died unmarried.

3. Grace, eldest daughter and co-heiress, married Thomas Coward, esq. recorder of Winchester, ancestor of the Cowards of Sparkgrove.

4. Rachel, second daughter and co-heiress, married Hugh Bickham, esq. in her right, of the Priory, in Taunton.

5. Gertrude, third daughter and co-heiress, married Anthony Methuen, esq. of Bradford, in the county of Wilts, ancestor of the Methuens of Corsham, in the same county.

6. Margaret, fourth daughter and co-heiress, married Thomas Wyndham, esq. ancestor of the Wyndhams of Yately, in Hampshire.

Upon the death of Mr. More, in 1695, his estates were divided amongst his four daughters and co-heiresses as under.—

To Mrs. Coward, the mansion house and demesnes of Sparkgrove, and his estates in Westcombe and Badcombe, in the county of Somerset; the manor of Tarrant-Hinton, in the county of Dorset, with the perpetual advowson of the rectory of that place.

To Mrs. Bickham, the Priory of Taunton, with the manors and demesnes thereto belonging; also the manor of Ash-Priors, near Taunton. This property was sold about fifty years ago.

To Mrs. Methuen, the manors of Cheddon-Fitzpaine, near Taunton, and Withey, near Huntspill.

To Mrs. Wyndham, the manor of Hawkchurch and Wild-Court, in the county of Dorset, with the perpetual advowson of Hawkchurch.

## CARMELITES.

There appears to have been a small house of White or Carmelite Friars here, founded in 1322, by Walter de Meriet, lord of the manor of Combe-Flory. The site of this monastery is in that part of the parish of Bishop's-Hull, which adjoins Taunton.

So lately as the last century the old house which stood on this spot, which has been rebuilt and is now the residence of Edward Coles, esq. was known by the name of Paul's Abbey. The field in front, and the bridge behind, called at this day, Paul's Field and Paul's Bridge, appear to have been denominated from it.

The only notices we have of these friars are in the Patent Rolls and in Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*. They are not mentioned in Leland's Survey; therefore it is probable the house had been suppressed, or dissolved before the general dissolution of monasteries.\*

## LEPER-HOUSE.

Another religious foundation adjoining to Taunton, but in fact in the parish of West-Monkton, was a Leper-House, near Saint-Margaret's chapel, at the bottom of East-reach. This hospital was founded in the reign of king Henry III. before the year 1200,<sup>\*</sup> for the maintenance and support of poor lepers, by Thomas Lambrizt, or Lambright, a merchant of Taunton, whose successors, about 1280, annexed the advowson thereof to the abbey of Glastonbury.

\* Pat. 15th Edw. III. p. 2. m. 44 vel 45.—Tanner's *Notitia Monast.* preface, p. 16, 17.—Collinson's *Hist. of Somerset*, vol. iii. p. 236.

\* Tradition assigns the foundation of this house to the time when St. Mary Magdalen's church was built in Taunton.

'The only notice we have of this hospital is in Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*.' It is situate just without the turnpike-gate at the bottom of East-reach, and has long been converted into an alms-house, for the poor of the parish of West-Monkton.

In the front wall of this alms-house there is a stone, about two feet four inches, by one foot seven inches, on which is carved a shield, surrounded by a mitre, richly ornamented with jewels, as are also the strings hanging from it. On the shield are the letters R. B. in a cipher, which some have supposed to be a date, 1133, but they are the initials of Richard Beere, abbot of Glastonbury, from 1493 to 1544.<sup>1</sup>

#### SUFFRAGAN BISHOP OF TAUNTON.

In the year 1535, an act of parliament<sup>2</sup> was passed setting forth that certain dioceses in England required the aid of assistant or suffragan bishops, who were to be, in the words of the act, "honest, discreet, spiritual persons, learned and of good conversation." The bishop of the diocese was to name a fit and proper person as his suffragan, who was to be approved by the king, and by him recommended to the archbishop of Canterbury, for consecration. Taunton is among the places<sup>3</sup> appointed for the sees of suffragan bishops,

<sup>1</sup> Tanner's *Notitia Monast.* by Nasmith—*Cartularium Glaston.* MS. Macro, fo. 119, b.—Collinson's *Hist. of Som.* vol. iii. fo. 236.

<sup>2</sup> *Gent. Mag.* Oct. 1785, p. 779.

<sup>3</sup> This act was repealed in 1553, soon after the accession of queen Mary, but was revived in 1559, under Elizabeth, and is still in force.

<sup>4</sup> The following are the names of the several places in England, to which suffragan bishops were appointed, as directed by the act,



and in the year 1538, William Finche, prior of Bremar, in Wiltshire, was consecrated bishop of Taunton,<sup>1</sup> to act as suffragan to the bishop of Bath and Wells.<sup>2</sup>

namely, at *Dover*, for the diocese of Canterbury; at *Nottingham* and *Hull*, for that of York; at *Colchester*, for London; at *Berwick-upon-Tweed*, for Durham; at *Guilford*, *Southampton*, and the *Isle of Wight*, for Winchester; at *Bedford*, *Leicester*, *Grantham*, and *Huntingdon*, for Lincoln; at *Thetford* and *Ipswich*, for Norwich; at *Shaftesbury*, *Milton*, and *Marlborough*, for Salisbury; at *Taunton*, for Bath and Wells; at *Bridgnorth*, for Hereford; at *Shrewsbury*, for Lichfield and Coventry; at *Cambridge*, for Ely; at *St. Germain's*, for Exeter; and at *Penrith*, for Carlisle. These were to be the sees of suffragan bishops, and no more suffragans were to be allowed than those above-mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> Barclay, in the edition of his "Ship of Fools," printed by Pynson, in 1509, dedicates that work to Thomas Cornish, bishop of Tine, and *suffragan bishop of Wells*.

<sup>2</sup> This was John Clerk, D. D. and master of the rolls, who succeeded Cardinal Wolsey in this see, in 1523. In the year 1527, when king Henry VIII. wrote against Luther, he sent a copy of his tract to the pope, by the hands of Dr. Clerk, who, on the occasion, delivered an elegant oration before the consistory of the cardinals. Pope Leo was so well pleased with the present, that he rewarded the king's zeal with the title of "Defender of the Faith," which title the kings of England have used ever since. The bishop was afterwards much employed in embassies, and in 1540 was sent ambassador to the duke of Cleves, to assign the reasons of the king's having divorced his sister, the lady Anne of Cleves. This embassy cost him his life, for he is supposed to have been poisoned. Having, with great difficulty, reached home, he died in February, 1541, and was interred in the burial ground of the monastery, called the Minories, in London.—*Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops*, p. 310. —*Richardson De Præsulibus Angliæ Commentarius*, p. 387. T.

## ARCHDEACONRY OF TAUNTON.

In the ancient history of Taunton must be included its establishment into an archdeaconry. Archdeacons, in their original institution, had no relation to the diocese, but only to the episcopal see; and no jurisdiction, either in the cathedral or out of it, was annexed to their office. But when bishops, as barons; were obliged to give a more frequent attendance upon the kings, in their great councils, it became expedient to invest delegates with authority for the government of their dioceses; and it was natural to enlarge the powers of those, who had been before more immediately connected with their sees. This happened soon after the Norman conquest, and the first prelate, who instituted an archdeacon in his diocese, was Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 1075.<sup>1</sup>

The first appointment of this kind in Taunton, appears to have been in 1106, the seventh of Henry I. In 1293 it was rated at fifty marks.

• The archdeaconry of Taunton comprizes four deaneries, namely, Bridgwater, in which are thirty-one parishes; Crewkerne, containing fifty-five; Dunster, forty-four; and Taunton, forty-six; making together one hundred and seventy-six parishes.

## ‘LIST OF THE ARCHDEACONS OF TAUNTON.’

Robert is supposed to have enjoyed this dignity in 1106.

Godfrey was archdeacon in this diocese, (supposed of Taunton,) about 1185.

<sup>1</sup> Grey's Ecclesiastical Law, p. 353, 355, and Jacob's Law Dictionary. T.

<sup>2</sup> From Locke's MSS. and Le Neve's Fasti Ecclesie Anglicane, p. 46, 47. T.

**William de Wrotham, 1204. He died 3d of Henry III.**

He was the eldest son of William de Wrotham, warden of the stannaries in Devonshire and Cornwall, and forester in fee of the forest of North-Petherton in this county. He was engaged in many secular employments. In the 6th of John he was, together with Reginald de Cornhull, receiver of the customs of all the merchants in the kingdom, and accounted in that year for nearly six thousand pounds. In the seventh of John he obtained a charter for a market to be held every Tuesday at the manor of North-Curry, for the benefit of the church of Wells, to which that manor appertained. In the 8th of John he was a trustee to Geoffrey Fitz-Piers, earl of Essex, upon the founding of the hospital of Sutton in Yorkshire. On the death of his father he succeeded as heir to his lands, and to the office of forester of North-Petherton, which, on account of his being a clergyman, was executed during his life-time by his brother Richard de Wrotham.

**Hugh de Wilton, 1219.**

**Walter St. Quintin, 1244. He died 15th Cal. Jan. (Dec. 18th,) 1263.**

**William Burnell, it is believed, was the next. He was archdeacon in 1294.**

**Gilbert de Molendinis was instituted 17 Cal. Jun. (May 16th,) 1298.**

**Peter de Aveburi, 1301.**

**Henry de Chanington, 1308.**

**Robert Hareward, Dec. 12th, 1320.**

**William Thringhull, 1371.**

**Thomas Arundel was made archdeacon of Taunton at the age of 22, 1373.**

He was the son of Robert Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, and was consecrated bishop of Ely, on the 6th of April, 1375. In 1380 he was made lord chancellor of England, and translated to the see of York on the 3d of April, 1388; and was the first that was ever removed from thence to Canterbury. He received his pall on the 10th of February, 1396. He resigned to Richard the second his

post of lord chancellor, which he had held for ten years. Being convicted of high treason, (with the earl of Arundel, his brother, who was beheaded,) he fled to Rome, and his see was given to Roger Walden, dean of York. Arundel was however restored by Henry the fourth on his accession to the throne, for which favour the necessary steps were taken to procure of the clergy a tenth for the crown as a subsidy.

The king, not contented with a tenth, afterwards attempted to obtain greater subsidies from the clergy; but our archbishop vigorously opposed them, urging among other reasons, that though the clergy did not serve personally in the king's wars, yet they were not idle, inasmuch as they daily *prayed* for the king and the realm, as well in time of peace as war. To which the prolocutor of the house of convocation, sir John Cleyn, replied, "It was no matter for their prayers, so the king might have their money." This prelate severely punished the Lollards or Wickliffites, and forbade the translation of the bible into the English language. He died Feb. 20th, 1413, exactly a month before king Henry the fourth, and was buried in the cathedral church of Canterbury;<sup>\*</sup> to which he built

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<sup>\*</sup> Arundel's warm zeal for suppressing the Lollards or Wickliffites, carried him to several unjustifiable severities against the heads of that sect, particularly against sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham. The Lollards asserted the immediate hand of heaven in the manner of his death. He died of an inflammation in the throat, and it is said that he was struck with this disease as he was pronouncing sentence of excommunication and condemnation on the lord Cobham; and from that time, notwithstanding all the assistance of medicine, he could swallow neither meat nor drink, and was starved to death. The Lollards imputed this lamentable end to the just judgment of God upon him, both for his severity to that sect, and forbidding the scriptures to be translated into English; and bishop Godwin seems to lean to the same opinion.—*Biograph. Diet.* 3. p. 25.

There is an unique portrait of archbishop Arundel preserved in the Pemshurst collection, among the pictures of the Constables of Queensborough castle, (of which this prelate, it seems, was one.) This portrait is highly valuable, as it is the only authority for the likeness of the archbishop known to be extant; if we except

a fine spire, called to this day, *Arundel steeple*. He left to his palace, at Ely, a magnificent table, ornamented with gold and precious stones, originally belonging to the king of Spain, and sold by the Black Prince to this bishop for three hundred marks. He had the generosity to obtain, by his influence, the see of London for Roger Walden, his adversary, who had succeeded him in the see of Canterbury, after his flight to Rome, but was dispossessed of it on his restoration.

**Neapolitanus Cardinalis, 1388.**

**Ralph de Ergham, 1391.**

He was elected bishop of Salisbury in 1375, from which see he was translated to that of Bath and Wells, in 1388. He built the inn called the George in Wells, and erected in that city a college, at the end of a lane, called College-lane, for fourteen priests; gave ornaments and plate to the church, to the value of one hundred and forty pounds, and appropriated to the chapter the parsonage of Pucklechurch. He died in 1401.

**Thomas Polton or Pulton, Aug. 12th, 1403.**

He was dean of York; bishop of Hereford, 1420; bishop of Chichester, 1423; from which see he was translated to that of Worcester, 1426. He died at Rome, and was buried in that city.

**Nicholas Calton, Sept. 1st, 1416. He died in 1440.**

**Adam Molines, LL. D. 1440.**

He was of the baronial family of Molines; dean of Salisbury;

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an illumination in the British Museum, from which, in the wretched way it has been copied and engraved in *Strutt's Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, no idea whatever can be formed. The features and expression in the face of this picture are strongly marked. The archbishop wears a close cap on his head, and a fur tippet round his neck; behind him are the mitre and pastoral staff, both gilt, according to the taste of the times. His arms, impaled with those of the see of Canterbury, and a red rose, the badge of the house of Lancaster, fill the two upper corners of the picture.

There is a copy of this portrait in the gallery of the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, from which there is an engraving, coloured in imitation of the original, in *Brayley and Herbert's "Lambeth Palace illustrated,"* London, 1800, quarto.

bishop of Chichester, 1445 ; and lord privy seal. He was slain at Portsmouth by mariners hired for that purpose, by Richard, duke of York, 1445.

Andrew Hales was admitted Jan. 19th, 1445 ; archdeacon of Wells, 1450.

Robert Stillington, LL. D. was collated April 20th, 1450 ; archdeacon of Wells, 1465.

He was keeper of the privy seal and lord chancellor of England ; was consecrated bishop of Bath and Wells, March 16th, 1466, in the room of John Phreas, who had been elected, but died before consecration. This bishop firmly adhered to the house of York, against that of Lancaster, and countenanced Lambert Simnell in opposing Henry the seventh, for which he was imprisoned at Windsor in 1487, and after four years confinement, died in May, 1491. He was buried in the chapel of Our-Lady in the cloister of Wells cathedral, which he himself had built, and which was afterwards destroyed (together with the great wall of the palace,) by sir John Yates ; and within the memory of those who had seen his funeral, his bones were turned out of the leaden coffin in which they were interred.

Richard Langport, May 14th, 1487.

Oliver King was installed July 12th, 1490.

He was sometime fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and registrar of the order of the garter, and canon of Windsor ; one of the prebendaries of St. Paul's ; elected bishop of Exeter 1492, from which see he was translated to that of Bath and Wells in 1495 ; and secretary of state to Edward IV. and V. and to Henry VII. He laid the foundation of a new abbey church at Bath.

William Worseley, LL. D. was admitted Feb. 18th, 1492.

Robert Sherburn, A. M. was installed Dec. 16th, 1496.

John Ednam, S. T. P. was installed May 27th, 1506.

Robert Honywood, LL. D. was installed Aug. 18th, 1509. He died Jan. 22d, 1522, and was buried at Windsor.

**Thomas Cranmer, S. T. P.** succeeded in 1522 ; and in 1533 was made archbishop of Canterbury.

He was born at Aslacton, in Nottinghamshire, and was fellow of Jesus college, Cambridge. He was a theological and polemical writer, eminent for his piety and learning, and for being the first protestant archbishop of Canterbury ; but his political character, on account of the variations of his conduct, is differently treated by historians and controversial writers. He assisted in setting up lady Jane Grey, for which treason queen Mary pardoned him, but had him burnt for heresy at Oxford, March 21st, 1556, in the 67th year of his age.

**John Redmayne** was archdeacon of Taunton in 1547.

It is uncertain how long before this he held this office, or whether there were any between him and Cranmer. He died in Nov. 1551, and was buried in Westminster abbey.

**John Fitzjames, A. M.** May 22d, 1554.

**Justinian Lancaster, 1560.**

**Philip Bisse, S. T. P.** was installed May 28th, 1584.

He was educated at Magdalen college, Oxford ; was a learned man, and a great lover of books. He had an extensive library, which, at his death, he bequeathed to Wadham college, Oxford, then newly founded, in which is preserved his portrait at full length, given by the foundress. He died in 1613, and was buried in the chancel of Batecombe church in this county, where there is an inscription to his memory.

**Matthew Sutcliffe, LL. D.** was installed Jan. 30th, 1586.

**Peter Lilye, S. T. P.** 1604. He died in 1614.

**Samuel Ward, S. T. P.** was installed April 29th, 1615.

He was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, chaplain extraordinary to king James the first, and one of the four divines sent by him to the synod of Dort. He wrote several tracts, and some valuable manuscripts of his are now in Emmanuel college, Cambridge, of which he was fellow. In 1609 he became master of Sidney college, in that university. He assisted in translating the bible, and was a most excellent governor and exact disciplinarian. Being one of the

assembly of divines, and of the religious committee, he was therefore esteemed a puritan. But in the civil wars of Charles the first, he was one of those who consented that the college plate should be coined for the use of his majesty ; for which he was deprived of his ecclesiastical preferments, March 30th, 1648, when he was plundered and cast into prison, where he contracted a disease which put a period to his life, in great poverty, about six weeks after his release. Several of his letters are in the collection of archbishop Usher.

**William Piers, S. T. P. was installed Dec. 19th, 1648.**

He was the eldest son of Dr. William Piers, bishop of Bath and Wells, and was rector of Kingsbury. He was eminent for his abilities and virtues, yet in 1654 he was sequestered from his preferments, and, for mere subsistence, married a low woman, who had a little farm, on which he laboured, threshing his own corn, and selling his apples, butter, eggs, poultry, cheese, &c. in the markets of Ilminster and Taunton ; but worse misfortunes befel him, for he became god-father to a child called Charles, and for this suffered imprisonment, from which he was not released till the restoration of Charles the second, when he was made doctor in divinity, prebendary of Wells, and rector of Christian-Malford, in Wiltshire. He died in April, 1682, aged 70, and is buried in Wells cathedral, where there is an inscription to his memory.

**Edward Waple, S. T. B. installed April 22d, 1682.**

**Edmund Archer, S. T. P. was installed July 26th, 1712.**

**George Atwood, S. T. B. 1722.**

**Lionel Seaman, M. A. 1753.**

**Francis Potter, M. A. 1758.**

**William Willes, M. A. 1761.**

**Thomas Camplin, LL. D. 1767.**

**John Turner, M. A. 1780.**

**George Trevelyan, LL. B. son of Sir John Trevelyan, bart. 1817.**



## TAUNTON COINAGE.

‘ In Domesday-Book it is mentioned that there was a mint at Taunton, which yielded to the bishop of Winchester a profit of fifty shillings. There are some coins of the conqueror’s yet extant, which were struck in the Taunton mint.

‘ The obverse of the Taunton penny exhibits the conqueror full-faced, with a cap of state ornamented with pearls and labels. The whole of the bust is confined within the inner circle, and has, on the right side, a sceptre with a cross patée, and on the left side, one with four pearls, both erect. The legend is, **WILLEM REX ANGI.** and the cross, from which it commences, is over the head. The reverse has eight rays issuing from a common centre of the form of a pellet, and terminating alternately in three pearls and a flower with three petals. The legend is **BRENTRIC ON TANT.**’ The weight is  $20\frac{1}{4}$  grains.\*

\* The putting of the moneyer’s name on coins was a practice unknown till the sixth century. It came in, gradually, a century after the Roman mints had ceased in Europe, with the empire; and when private persons contracted with the king for the little mints, and put their names to identify their mintage.—*Pinkerton’s Medals*, vol. i. p. 370.

The names of the towns are found added to those of the moneyers on a few coins of Alfred and Edward the Elder; they are more numerous in the reign of Athelstan, and the practice became general after the time of Edward the Martyr, A. D. 975.

\* The editor owes this description of the conqueror’s Taunton penny to Mr. H. Norris, of this town, who has one in his collection, in fine preservation. Mr. Norris had this coin from the Rev. Dr. Abbott, who resided in Bedfordshire.—Mr. N. has also one of the conqueror’s pennies, struck at Exeter; it has on the

The bishop of Winchester's mint at Taunton affords me an opportunity of giving a few particulars relating to the mints and coinage in the towns of England, during the Saxon and Norman periods.

In the laws of Athelstan, the places of the mints in his reign are thus enumerated :—

In Canterbury there are seven *Myneteras* ; four of the king's, two of the archbishop's,<sup>1</sup> and one of the abbot's.<sup>2</sup>

In Rochester, there are three ; two of the king's, and one of the bishop's.

In London, eight ; in Winchester, six ; in Lewes, two ; in Hastings, one ; in Chichester, one ; in

obverse a full-faced figure of the king extended to the outer circle, with a sword in his right hand, and a cap of state, similar to that of the Taunton penny. The legend is WILLEM REXI, and the cross, from which it begins, is placed by the right shoulder. The reverse has a kind of cross-potent surmounting a true-love knot, with three bows at each angle ; the legend is SEWINE ON IEXECI. The weight is  $21\frac{1}{2}$  grains. The die of both is of the same diameter, but as the Exeter penny has a greater breadth of metal, the other has probably been reduced by clipping.—Mr. Bluett, of Taunton, has in his collection one of the Exeter pennies of William Rufus, in high preservation, and bearing the same moneyer's name as that of William the Conqueror's above-mentioned.

The names of the conqueror's mintmasters lead us to suppose that they were all Saxon artists.

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical coins are extant of the archbishops of Canterbury, Wulfred, A. D. 804 ; Ceolnoth, 830 ; Plegmund, 889.—*Pinkerton's Medals*, vol. ii. p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> The abbot of St. Augustine in Canterbury, in right of his abbacy, had *cuncum moneta*, allowance of mintage and coinage of money, which continued until the time of king Stephen, and then was lost ; Sylvester, the forty-fifth abbot, who died in 1161, being the last that enjoyed it.—*Leake on Eng. Money*, p. 50.

Hampton, two ; in Wareham, two ; in Exeter, two ; in Shaftesbury, two ; and one in several of the other boroughs.<sup>1</sup>

The coins yet extant shew that during the Saxon period, there were very few considerable towns without a mint, for besides those particularly mentioned in the laws of Athelstan, there are coins of Lincoln, Exeter, Norwich, Evesham, York, Gloucester, Ipswich, Derby, Bristol, Shrewsbury,<sup>2</sup> Worcester, Wallingford, Thetford, and others.<sup>3</sup>

King Edward the Confessor, when he confirmed the liberties of St-Edmundsbury, gave to abbot Baldwin a stamp or die, and authority to have an exchange or mint, and to coin in his monastery.<sup>4</sup>

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In Domesday-Book we find the following places mentioned as having either a mint or mintmasters:—

At Lewes, when money was coined, every mintmaster paid twenty shillings.

At Wallingford, the mintmaster held one house free, as often as he coined money.

At Dorchester, there were two mintmasters, each of whom paid to the king one mark of silver, and twenty shillings when money was coined.

At Shaftesbury, there were three mintmasters, each

<sup>1</sup> Wilkins, *Leges Anglo-Sax.* p. 59.—Turner's *Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 614.

<sup>2</sup> On a coin of Edward the Confessor's, struck in the Shrewsbury mint, the inscription is, *Edward Rex Angliæ*, and on the reverse, *Aelman on Scrobe*.—*Hist. of Shrewsbury*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Leake on English Money, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Stow's *Annals*, p. 93.—Leake on Eng. Money, p. 17.

of whom paid one mark of silver, and twenty shillings every time they coined money.

At Wareham, there were two mintmasters, each of whom paid one mark of silver to the king, and twenty shillings every time they coined money.

At Bridport, there was a mintmaster, who paid to the king one mark of silver, and twenty shillings every time he coined money.

At Bath, the king had a mint, which paid one hundred shillings.

At Oxford, one Suetman is mentioned as a mintmaster.

At Worcester, when money was coined, every mintmaster paid at London twenty shillings for the use of the dies.

At Hereford, there were seven mintmasters, one of whom belonged to the bishop. When money was coined, every mintmaster paid eighteen shillings for the delivery of the dies, and from the day they received them for the space of one month, each of them paid to the king twenty shillings. The bishop's mintmaster paid the same to the bishop. When the king came to the city, the mintmasters coined as much as he ordered, but the king furnished the silver. Each of these seven mintmasters enjoyed sac and soc. On the death of any of the king's mintmasters, twenty shillings were paid to the king, as a heriot; but if he died without having disposed of his effects, the king had all his goods.

At Huntingdon, there were three mintmasters, who paid forty shillings between the king and the earl, but they are not there now (that is, when Domeaday was compiled.)

At Leicester, the king receives yearly of the mintmasters twenty pounds, of which the earl has the third part.

At Shrewsbury, the king had three mintmasters, who, whenever they received the dies for coining money, paid twenty shillings each to the king for the first fifteen days, in the same manner as the other mintmasters of the realm, and this they did every time they coined money.

At Chester, in the time of king Edward, there were in that city seven *monetarii*, or mintmasters, who, when they coined money, gave seven pounds to the king and the earl, over and above their rent.

The burgesses of Colchester and Malden paid twenty pounds for the privilege of coining money, which was settled by Waleran, and they appealed to the king, that he remitted them ten pounds; but Walchelin, the bishop of London's tenant, demanded of them forty pounds.

Thetford paid to the king forty pounds, for the liberty of coining money.<sup>1</sup>

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The following extract from the records in the reign of king John, will throw some light upon what is said in Domesday-Book under Hereford and Shrewsbury, respecting the delivery of the dies to the mintmasters. The mints in the several towns of England, and the

<sup>1</sup> Vide Domesday-Book, under the several towns mentioned.— See also Turner's Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. ii. p. 614.

The pennies of the mints of Oxford, Colchester, Hereford, Huntingdon, and Thetford, are engraven in *Folker's Tables of Gold and Silver Coins*.

officers employed therein, namely, the moneyers, assayers, and *custodes cuneorum*, were, it appears, under the supervisal and direction of the chief justicier, or the treasurer and barons of the exchequer.

“ In the 9th year of king John, the moneyers, assayers, and *custodes cuneorum* of London, were commanded to appear at Westminster, in the quinzime of St. Dennis, to receive there the king’s commands, and to bring thither all their dies, sealed up with their seals, and to summon all the workers of money of London, and other persons who were skilled in the art of making money, to appear there at the same time. And the moneyers, assayers, and *custodes cuneorum* of Winchester, Exeter, Chichester,<sup>1</sup> Canterbury, Rochester, Ipswich, Norwich, Lynn, Lincoln, York, Carlisle, Northampton, Oxford, Bury St. Edmunds, and Durham,<sup>2</sup> were commanded to appear at the same time and place.”

<sup>1</sup> In the 6th of John, there is a grant of the privilege of a mint to the bishop of Chichester :—“ *Sciatis quod concessimus venerabili patri nostro Cicestr. episcopo, quod habeat cuneum suum in civitate Cicestræ, &c. teste 29 April.*”—*Claus. 6 John, m. 3.*—*Blount’s Law Dict. verb. Cuncum Monetæ.*—*Leake on Eng. Money, p. 65.*

<sup>2</sup> King Richard the first, after his return from his captivity in Austria, granted licence to Philip, bishop of Durham, to coin money, which liberty none of his predecessors had enjoyed of long time before.—*Leake on Eng. Money, p. 59.*

For an account of the coins struck in the Durham mint, the reader is referred to “ *Two Dissertations on the Mint and Coins of the Bishops of Durham, by the Rev. Mark Noble.*—*London, 1780,*”—*quarto.*

<sup>3</sup> *Pat. 9 John. m. 5.*—*Madox’s Excheq. p. 198.*

‘ Notwithstanding the number of mints which from this record appear to have been in England in the reign of John, there are no coins found of that king, except those which were struck in Ireland. The same observation applies to his predecessor, Richard I. of whom there are no coins remaining, but those struck in the Anglo-Gallic provinces of Poitou and Aquitain, and they are of the first rarity.’

‘ The captivity of Richard I. and the immense sum paid for his redemption, must have much impoverished the kingdom. His ransom amounted to one hundred thousand marks, which, at 13s. 4d. a mark, make one million, six hundred thousand pennies, then the only coin, a vast sum in the currency of those days, and which prevents our wonder at the rarity of the coins of Richard I. or of his successor. There is little doubt but the public poverty arising from this cause gave rise to much of the ferment in John’s reign; and perhaps we may pronounce that it is to the captivity of Richard that we are indebted for Magna Charta’.

#### TRADESMEN’S TOKENS.

Before the reign of James the first, when copper was first coined by authority, it was stamped by any person who chose to do it.<sup>1</sup> The constables of Taunton, as did those of other towns, exercised this privilege, and they continued to do it long after the time of James the first.<sup>2</sup> This coin was stamped with a tau

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 84, 431.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> Priestley’s *Lectures on History*, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> I am inclined to think that we had no municipal coins or tradesmen’s tokens here before the middle of the 17th century; at least, all that I have seen with dates were struck between 1650 and 1670. H. N.

in a tun, (a rebus expressive of the town's name) on one side, and the legend, *A Taunton Farthing*; on the other side, with an embattlement of a castle, and the legend, *By the Constables*, with the date. It should seem that other persons availed themselves of the privilege of stamping copper, and it may be concluded from the legends on this money, that the date of the year, the name of the place, and the name of the person who stamped it, were necessary to a legal tender of it in payment.'

'The tokens described in the following list were all struck in Taunton, and are now in the collections of Mr. H. Norris and Mr. J. Bluett, of this town. It is believed there are a few others extant, which are not in either of these collections. This list contains the name of the tradesman issuing each token, the legends and inscriptions, and the sign of the issuer, printed in *italic*, impressed upon them. The first line is the legend on the obverse, the second that on the reverse.

' TOWN PIECES.

1. A Taunton farthing. *Tau-in-Tun.*  
By the constables, 1667. Tower triple-towered.
2. Taunton.—*Tower.*  
*Tun.*

' TOKENS.

1. Thomas Andrews—*woolpack.*  
In Taunton.
2. Thomas Androsse—*woolpack.*  
Of Tawnton, 1666. His halfe penny.

'I have seen many without dates; some with only the initials of the tradesman's name; and some without either name, date, or place; in particular, one with this legend, "The farthing of a merchant of the staple of England." H. N.



3. John Barton—*rose and crown.*  
Of Taunton, 1666.
4. Samuel Benden—*pair of scales.*  
Taunton, Somerset.
5. John Bobbett in—*bale of goods.*  
Taunton caryer.
6. William Chace—*unicorn.*  
In Tanton.
7. Christopher Cooke—*bunch of grapes.*  
In Tanton, 1667.
8. William Coricke—*shuttle.*  
In Taunton, 1655.
9. Abraham Crocker of Taunton—*weavers arms.*  
For nessesary change, 1666.
10. Edward Dawley—*wool-comb.*  
In Tanton James.
11. Roger Gale of—*grocers arms.*  
Taunton, 1652.
12. Matthew Gaylard—*hand holding a wool-comb.*  
Of Taunton, 1666.
13. Robart Gray—*caldron.*  
In Taunton, 1659.
14. Hugh Graye—*woolpack.*  
Of Taunton, 1666.
15. John Glyde—*seven stars.*  
Of Taunton.
16. Andrew Greggory—*globe.*  
In Taunton, 1655.
17. Jeffery Grove in—*clothworkers arms.*  
Tanton Deane, 1664.
18. Martin Hossham—*catharine wheel.*  
In Taunton, 1655.
19. Roger How of—  
Tauntun, 1653.
20. Thomas Lowdell of—*cock.*  
Tanton, mercer, 1658.

21. Joseph Maber'—*clothworkers arms*.  
In Tauntun, 1664.
22. John Meredith, 1666. For necessary change.  
Taunton.—*castle*.
23. John Meredith, mercer—*mercers arms*.  
In Taunton.
24. Robert Midleton—*crown*.  
In Tanton Magdalen.
25. Thomas Munden—*tau-in-tun*.  
In Taunton.
26. Tobias Osborne—*fountain*.  
In Taunton, 1666.
27. John Powel at the—*lion*.  
Red Lyon in Taunton.
28. Anthony Reynolds—*bell*.  
In 'Taunton, 1652.
29. John Satchell—*castle*.  
In Taunton, 1655.
30. Richard Snow—*catharine wheel*.  
In 'Taunton, 1655.
31. John Sprake in Taunton—*pair of scales*.  
In Somersetshire.
32. John Tampuson—  
In Taunton, 1654.
33. Steaphen Timewell—*hat and feather*.  
Of Taunton.
34. Robert 'Tompson—*clothiers sheers*.  
Of Taunton.
35. George Treagle of—*book*.  
Taunton in Sommerset.
36. John Tubb, 1666.  
In Taunton.
37. At the 3 widows,  
In Taunton, 1665.

\* Some of Joseph Maber's tokens are of brass, and others of white metal.

38. Henry Young at the—*Angel*.  
*Angel* in 'Taunton.

' We had no copper money in England under the authority of the government until the year 1672, with a few small exceptions after the time of queen Elizabeth, whose aversion to a copper coinage is well known. Edward the sixth was the last prince under whom farthings could possibly be coined of silver, that metal being so much increased in its value, and though it is known from records, that he did coin farthings, only a very small number of them has been discovered. The smallness indeed of the silver halfpenny, though continued down to the commonwealth, was of extreme inconvenience, on account of its minute size. Hence, in Elizabeth's time, there being no state farthings, some cities, as Bristol, Oxford, and Worcester, struck farthings, which were confined to the use of their respective inhabitants, until called in by government in 1594. Besides these cities, near three thousand tradesmen and others coined leaden tokens, upon returning which to the person who issued them, he gave current coin or value for them as desired.

' In 1594 this practice had got to a great length, and government had serious thoughts of a copper coinage; for a small copper coin was now struck, of about the size of a silver two-pence, with the queen's monogram upon one side, and a rose on the other, the running legend upon both sides being, *the pledge of a halfpenny*. Patterns of this occur both in copper and silver, but the queen not being able to resign her fixed aversion to a copper coinage, the scheme fell to the ground. It was not revived until the succeeding reign, when upon the 19th of May, 1613, king James's royal

farthing tokens commenced by proclamation. They are mostly of the same size with the above, and have upon one side two sceptres in saltire, surmounted with a crown, and the harp upon the other. Their legend is the king's common titles running upon each side.

‘ These pieces were by no means favourably received, but continued in a kind of reluctant circulation all this reign, and the beginning of the succeeding. In 1635 Charles the first struck them with the rose instead of the harp. The vast number of counterfeits, and the king's death in 1649, put an utter stop to their currency; and the tokens of towns and tradesmen again took their run, increasing prodigiously until 1672, when farthings, properly so called, were first coined by government.

‘ Government, however, had frequent ideas of improving the copper coinage, for many pattern pieces for farthings occur. So early as 1640 one occurs, upon one side of which the legend is *farthing tokens*, and upon the other, *Typus Monetæ Ang. Æris*, thought to be the work of Briot, as resembling his pattern shilling. Trial farthings of the commonwealth likewise appear with various types and legends; those of Oliver have his bust with different reverses, and one of his bears the singular date of 1651, (if Snelling does not mistake) when he was not protector until 1653.

‘ Of Charles the second many pattern farthings are known before 1672, when they and halfpence were made public money, of which the most remarkable is that with the king's bust, *Carolus a Carolo*, and the reverse, the figure of Britannia with *Quatuor Maria vindico*. These were first struck in 1665, and most commonly occur in silver; whence the copper are

esteemed the more precious. None of them ever were in circulation, though we meet with a few impressions both in silver and copper, dated 1675 and 1676. The halfpence of this legend are more common in copper than in silver.

‘In 1670 current halfpence and farthings first began to be struck at the tower, but they were not proclaimed until the 16th of August, 1672. They were of pure Swedish copper, and the dies were engraved by Roettier. - These continued until the last year of Charles the second, 1684, when some disputes arising about the copper, latterly had from English mines, tin farthings of James the second<sup>1</sup> were coined with a stud of copper in the centre, and inscribed round the edge, as the crown pieces, with *Nummorum famulus*, 1685 or 1686. Halfpence of the same kind were issued the year after, and tin continued to be coined till 1692, to the amount of sixty-five thousand pounds. In 1693, the tin was all called in, and the copper coinage commenced anew.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Henry Norris has in his collection one of Charles the second's tin farthings, and Mr. Bluett has the same farthings of Charles the second, James the second, and William and Mary. In the latter collection, there are also the scarce *Quatuor Maria Vindico* farthing of Charles the second, in copper and silver, and the half farthing coined by king James the first, which is now rare.

In 1811, during the great scarcity of change, when shilling silver tokens were generally issued in all the principal towns in England, one was struck for Mr. John Bluett, and intended to be issued at Taunton, but it was never circulated.

In 1812, Messrs. Cox, ironfounders in Taunton, issued penny copper tokens.

<sup>2</sup> Pinkerton's Medals, vol. ii. p. 105.

## CHAPTER II.

PLAN OF THE TOWN—PUBLIC BUILDINGS—SAINT MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH—LIST OF VICARS—MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS—SAINT JAMES'S CHURCH—LIST OF INCUMBENTS—MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS—PAUL'S MEETING—BAPTISTS' CHAPEL—TRINITARIAN BAPTISTS' CHAPEL—OCTAGON CHAPEL—QUAKERS' CHAPEL—METHODISTS' CHAPEL—CATHOLIC CHAPEL—CONVENT—CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS—FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL—TAUNTON AND SOMERSET HOSPITAL—ALMS HOUSES—GRAY'S ALMS HOUSE—HUISH'S ALMS HOUSE—HENLEY'S ALMS HOUSE—POPE'S ALMS HOUSE—ALMS HOUSES IN MAGDALEN LANE—WORK-HOUSES—CHARITABLE DONATIONS—SAUNDERS'S CHARITY—PEOFFEE LANDS—TROWBRIDGE'S CHARITY—SIR GEORGE FAREWELL'S CHARITY—MOGGRIDGE'S CHARITY—MEREDITH'S CHARITY—SIR HUGH PARKER'S CHARITY—GADD'S CHARITY—STRINGLANDS—CASTLE AND ASSIZE-HALL—TOWN-HALL—BRIDEWELL—MARKET-HOUSE.

**F**EW towns are laid out in a superior mode for convenience or air, most of the streets being wide, and the arrangement leaving room, in general, for extensive outlets and gardens. The principal streets run from east to west, and from north to south. The street at which you enter from the London road to East-gate, nearly half a mile long, is named East-reach;<sup>\*</sup> in this street stands the Taunton and Somerset hospital, and here is held the great market for cattle, on the first Saturday in every month, lately removed from the castle-green. At East-gate commences East-street, which reaches nearly to the middle of the town. The

<sup>\*</sup> This street appears to have been called originally East-stretch, and to have been a place where the weavers extended their chains, or warps, which is here usually denominated a stretch. At the west end of the town we have a place applied to the same purpose, named Turkey-stretch. H. N.

central part of the town is called Fore-street, from which three streets branch out; one to the north, deriving its name from its aspect, North-street, at the upper end of which is the parade, or market-place, and the market-house and guildhall; the second running east and west, leading to St. Mary Magdalen's church is called Hammet-street, on the north side of which, in a little court, stands Huish's alms-house; and the third to the south, called High-street. On the west side of North-street is the castle-green, in which stand the assize-hall and the grammar-school. Parallel with High-street runs another called Paul-street, in which is the dissenters' chapel, called Paul's meeting; the southern extremity of which street is joined to High-street by a short one called Mary-street, where is the Baptists' chapel. From the west end of the latter runs southward a narrow street, called Barrack-street, from its leading to the barracks.

From the end of North-street, by the side of the river, extends eastward, St. James's-street, so called from St. James's church standing in it. Parallel with this lies one more retired, which from its situation has the name of Middle-street, where is the octagon chapel, in which the Rev. Mr. Baring's congregation assembles, at the east end of which street there is a row of modern built houses bearing the name of St. James's place. From the east end of Middle-street there branches off another called Canon-street, till it bends towards the left, when it takes the name of Tancred-street, and terminates at East-gate. Here it opens nearly opposite to another running southward from the same point called Silver-street, in which is the theatre, and the trinitarian baptists' chapel.

On the west side of the town, parallel with High-street, is a row of elegant houses, called the Crescent.

From North-street you pass over a bridge of two arches,<sup>1</sup> erected over the river Tone, and kept in repair by the county, to North-town, or Norton,<sup>2</sup> an adjoining village, formerly populous, but now greatly reduced in the number of houses and inhabitants. Another bridge, at the extremity of High-street, leads to Shuttern, or South-town,<sup>3</sup> which is included in the borough, and was also once much more populous than it is at present.

#### PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Among the first objects which accost the eye of the traveller, are the public buildings of the town; which, according to the purposes to which they are devoted, may be classed into those raised for

- |                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Religion,         | 3. Charity,  |
| 2. Civil government, | 4. Pleasure. |

In Taunton, the structures consecrated to religion are two parish churches, and seven dissenting meetings or chapels.

<sup>1</sup> Lambarde in his "Dictionarium Topogr. Hist." compiled about the year 1570, notices a *stone bridge* at Taunton.

<sup>2</sup> The antiquity of Norton is expressed in the following traditional distich:—

"Taunton was a furzy down

"When Norton was a market town." T.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. H. Norris has favoured me with another explanation of this term; he is inclined to think that the original name was Suthern, that is South-cot, from *suth*, south, and *ern*, a cottage. It appears, he observes, to have been anciently, like many other suburbs, no more than a hamlet, and to have been united to the town by the gradual progress of building. This conjecture receives considerable weight from the irregularity of the borough in this part, several of the intermediate houses being in the parish of Wilton, and others in the tithing of Holway. T.



## ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH.

Of the parish churches the largest and most magnificent is that dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, situate near the centre of the town. This church was originally only a chapel dependant on the conventual church of the priory. It is now a vicarage, valued in the king's books at twenty pounds, three shillings, and four-pence. The rectory of this parish was rated in pope Nicholas's taxation, in 1292, at ninety marks. The original appointment of the vicarage took place in 1308, in the second year of king Edward the second, under Walter (Haselshaw,<sup>1</sup>) then bishop of Bath and Wells; who, upon information of the want of due order and discipline in the parish, and the frequent danger to which the parishioners were exposed of dying without the usual preparatory ceremonies enjoined by the church, appointed Anthony de Bradeney, his official, and Henry de Chanyngton, archdeacon of Taunton, commissioners for that purpose. Accordingly they ordained, with the consent of the prior and convent, that Master Simon de Lyme, who had been already instituted by the ordinary as vicar of the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, should have, hold, and enjoy, for himself and his successors, for ever, all and singular the portions in which he had been so instituted.

<sup>1</sup> Walter Haselshaw was first dean, then bishop of Wells; sat ten years, and lies buried under a large marble slab, in the body of the church towards the north, almost over against the pulpit. He made many statutes, which, Richardson adds, are yet in force. His election to the see of Wells was confirmed by the royal assent, in 1302, the 30th of Edward I.—*Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops*, p. 300.—*Richardson de Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 375. T.

The ordination of this vicarage is remarkable. It allotted not a dead salary, or bare pecuniary pension, but standing provisions of all the accommodations for human life, as meat, drink, horse, corn, hay, &c. It is probable that most other vicarages were endowed in the same way ; that the vicar might be supported in plenty and credit. Yet, for greater encouragement, there was usually added, as an overplus, a pension in money.

The ordination appointed, that the vicar should receive, every week throughout the year, twenty-one canonical loaves,<sup>1</sup> that is, three loaves a day ; and forty-two flagons of conventual ale, that is, six flagons a day ; and seven loaves of choice boulted flour, of the same weight as the canonical loaves ; and twenty-eight loaves of fine wheaten flour ;<sup>2</sup> and seven flagons of brisk ale ;<sup>3</sup> and that he should receive every year, of the prior and convent, fifteen marks of silver ; and six loads of hay, every year, and seven bushels of oats per week, for the support of his horse ; and two shillings<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By canonical loaves I understand the household bread used by the canons, and appointed by the rule of their order—by conventual ale the common beverage of the convent. T.

<sup>2</sup> Small loaves or manchets, which in those days were generally called *chete bread*. T.

<sup>3</sup> Ale of a superior quality, distinguished anciently by the name of Welch ale. It is to be noted, that at this period our ancestors were unacquainted with beer ; the knowledge of which, together with the use of hops, appears to have been received from the Germans, about the middle of the reign of Henry VIII.—See *Spelman's Posthumous Works*, by Gibson, p. 147. T.

<sup>4</sup> The first shillings were coined by Henry VII. in 1505 ; but the term was used in computation for the twentieth part of a pound as early as the eleventh century. T.

a year for shoeing his horse ; and likewise all legacies bequeathed to him in the parish ;<sup>\*</sup> and that he should have the house and curtilage occupied by his predecessors ; and that he should moreover receive, as an augmentation, two quarters of bread-corn yearly, from the grange or granary belonging to the priory ; that the vicar, on his part, should, by himself, or curates, at his proper charge, serve, or cause to be served, the chapels of St. Mary Magdalen, of Trendle,<sup>†</sup> of the Castle,<sup>‡</sup> and of Fons-St.-George ;<sup>§</sup> and that he should find a resident curate for the chapel at Trendle, as soon as the parishioners should have provided a convenient habitation for him ; but that, for the ease of the vicar, the prior should appoint, on separate

<sup>\*</sup> Mortuaries, or bequests made to the church, in compensation of such tithes and oblations, as the testators were supposed to have forgotten or neglected to pay. T.

<sup>†</sup> Now Trull ; part of which constitutes at this day a tithing called North Trendle.—From whatever circumstance the parish derived its name, it is observable, that Trull and Trundle, from *trendel*, *Sax.* a bowl, are words of the same import, signifying to roll or twirl. T.

<sup>‡</sup> Probably a chapel within the precincts of the castle of Taunton. T.

<sup>§</sup> Wilton ; the manor of which is still called the manor of Fons George. The two names appear, at first sight widely different ; but if we consider that Wilton may be derived from *wyll* or *welle* and *town*, that is Well-Town, and that the church is dedicated to St. George, the resemblance is obvious. It is to be observed, that very small collections of houses were frequently denominated towns by our Saxon ancestors ; so Riston, or Ruishton, from *rise*, or *rush* that is Rush-Town ; and in the time of the ancient Britons, even the woods, in which they fortified themselves against the attacks of their enemies, were honoured with that appellation.—*See Cæsar de Bel. Gall. lib. v.* T.

stipends, one secular priest for the service of Stoke and Ruishton, another for the service of Staplegrove and St. James, and another for that of Bishop's-Hull; with this reservation, that on Sundays and solemn days, as often as occasion required, it should be lawful for the prior, with permission of his diocesan, to celebrate mass in the churches of Ruishton and St. James, by some of the friars belonging to the convent. This ordination was given at Taunton, the next Tuesday after the feast of All Saints, (Nov. 5th) 1308, and confirmed by the bishop at Chew, the next Wednesday after the feast of St. Martin, (Nov. 13th,) in the same year.

In 1314, it was proposed to make some amendment, and accordingly, John, then prior of Taunton, empowered friar Thomas de Sutton, one of his fellow canons, by a letter of attorney, dated in the chapter of the convent at Taunton, the 4th of the nones of April, to consent to such regulations as the bishop or his commissioners should think proper to appoint. But it does not appear that any amendment was made; for the original ordination was confirmed at Wells, on the ides of April following, by John de Drokenesford, then bishop of the diocese, and directed to be in all points inviolably observed.

The date of this endowment probably gives the time when this church was built; at least, when the original part of the edifice was raised. For the two outer aisles, as appears from the date on the porch, were built, (or perhaps one of them only, for there is a difference in the architecture) in 1508.

## CHANTRIES IN ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH.

Amongst the other endowments, dictated by the religion of the times, were chantries; which were little chapels, or particular altars, in cathedral, collegiate, and even parochial churches, with salaries from lands, or other revenues, for the maintenance of one or more priests, daily to sing mass and perform divine service for the soul of the donor, and such as he should direct. Seven of these chantries were annexed to St. Mary Magdalen's church. At the dissolution of the religious houses, a reserve, by way of pension to the priests who had officiated in them, was made out of the revenues of these chapels. The titles of those which were in the church of Taunton, the names of the last incumbents, and the amount of the yearly pensions, in 1553, stood as follows.

St. Andrew, - - -	Henry Bull, - -	5	0	0
St. Michael, - - -	John Seyman, -	4	16	0
Holy Trinity, - -	Ralph Wylkins, -	5	0	0
Holy Cross Fraternity,	W. Trowbridge, <sup>1</sup>	4	0	0
St. Ethelred, - - -	W. Callowe, - -	5	0	0
Virgin Mary, - - -	John Pytte, - -	4	0	0
Twing's Chantry, -	Alexander Maggot,	3	14	4

In the 21st of Richard II. Robert Bathe and Theophania, his wife, gave four messuages in Taunton, to the use of the fraternity of the Holy Cross, in the church of St. Mary Magdalen, Taunton.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collinson, vol. iii. p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> From the archives of Wells cathedral.

Religious guilds or fraternities were associations of laymen, who

St. Mary Magdalen's church is a spacious oblong structure, having a nave, chancel, and fine and lofty tower at the west end. The principal entrance is under a pointed arch in the tower, the area of which forms a kind of porch, which is separated from the nave by a screen of fretwork, in wood and iron, between the doors and the ends of which, rise in the inside, Corinthian pilasters. These, in a modern building, would be termed an elegant piece of workmanship, but in an ecclesiastical structure, where the arches and every attendant ornament are in a style so totally opposite to the Corinthian order, these adjuncts require only to be seen and compared with the original style of the building, to shew the absurd taste of those who constructed them.

The nave, or body of the church, is divided into *five ailes*, by four rows of clustered columns, supporting bluntly-pointed arches. This is a remarkable, and may be called a singular, instance of church architecture. The Saxons, in their ecclesiastical buildings, constructed them with only one aisle, in addition to the main body of the church, and this aisle was in general on the north side. After the Normans became established in England, they built a great number of monasteries and churches. These buildings were of large and magnificent proportions, and were constructed with an aisle on each side of the main body of the church. The writer of these pages has not seen

subscribed to a fund for supporting priests at a particular altar in some chapel of a cathedral or parochial church, and constituted ordinances touching the same. They were always incorporated by royal licence as a kind of collegiate society, having a common seal.

however, any church constructed with five aisles, but in the instance before us.

The middle aisle, or main body of the church, has on each side seven pillars, composed of four equal cylinders, supporting eight bluntly-pointed arches, consisting of several members. The capitals, if they may be so called, are formed by cherubs.

Over each of the arcades of the middle aisle there is a row of small windows, composed of four lights each. When the pointed-arch style was introduced into England about the year 1250, the architects of our churches imitated the Normans, in increasing the dimensions of every part of their structures; and having added greatly to the height, they were obliged, in order to procure sufficient light for the middle aisle, to carry up the walls over each arcade, for the purpose of introducing windows. The Normans, on account of the strength of their walls, formed a gallery over their arcades; and the architects of the pointed-arch style, where the strength of the building allowed, adopted the same mode.

The space between the windows over the arcade is filled with twelve richly-ornamented niches, canopied, and finished with delicately-formed pilasters, and small pinnacles, with crockets, ending in a trefoil head. These niches are supposed to have been occupied, previously to the reformation, by statues of the twelve apostles. In one of the columns on the north side of the middle aisle, there is a large niche, highly decorated, similarly with the smaller ones just mentioned. This has been imagined to have been occupied by a figure of the patron saint of the church, St. Mary Magdalen;

but it is more probable that this niche was filled with a statue of the Holy Virgin, or with a crucifix.

The middle aisle, and the two aisles immediately next it, are undoubtedly the oldest parts of the church.

The two outward side-aisles, and the porch on the south side of the church, are of more recent construction. On the porch there is the date 1508, from which it is reasonable to infer, that these parts of the fabric were finished in that year, and that the church had been then enlarged by the addition of these two aisles. The porch had only then been rebuilt in the place of a former one pulled down. It is probable that as the date just mentioned was the last year of the reign of king Henry the seventh, these additions might give rise to the opinion that the tower was built at that time. This opinion will soon be shewn not to be well founded, the style of the architecture of the tower being totally different: indeed the style alone will point out the true architect of such a beautiful and well-proportioned structure.

The tower is built in that style which has been denominated by the best English writers upon the subject, the "ornamented gothic." Dr. Toulmin says that "it was most probably erected by king Henry VII. who, when he came to the crown, rebuilt many of the churches in Somersetshire, in the style of the *florid gothic*, in reward of the attachment of that county to the Lancastrian party, in the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster."

Dr. Toulmin's supposition, with respect to the time of erecting this tower, is one with which the editor of these pages cannot by any means coincide. The tower



bears every character of having been erected either about the latter end of the fourteenth, or the beginning of the fifteenth century. This opinion is confirmed not only in the general appearance of the tower, but also in its proportions, in its ornaments, and in all its parts, as compared with other structures well known to have been built during the period alluded to. That style which bears the name of the "florid gothic," was principally, if not always, confined to oratories, porches, and chapels, but more particularly to sepulchral chapels, which were erected in our cathedral and collegiate churches. The principal specimens of this style are king Henry the seventh's chapel in Westminster abbey, bishop Alcock's chapel in Ely cathedral, and St. George's chapel, Windsor. There is certainly no parish church in the whole kingdom that exhibits a complete specimen of this style in all its parts.

That the tower of St. Mary Magdalen's church had its origin about the time above-mentioned, that is, about the latter end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century, is further confirmed from the circumstance that the manor of Taunton was always a favourite estate of the bishops of Winchester, whose property it is in right of their episcopal see; and the editor of this work has no doubt whatever, that *William of Wykeham*, bishop of Winchester, who was distinguished for his skill in architecture, was the founder of this tower, sometime between the years 1390 and 1400, and that it was not only built under his auspices, but from a plan given by himself. This celebrated prelate and able architect owed his fame and rise in the world to his superior knowledge of mathematics;

and his foundations of Winchester college and New college, Oxford, yet remain splendid monuments of his abilities and love of learning. He died in the year 1404, in the 80th year of his age.

The tower is a quadrangular structure, standing at the west end of the church, and has evidently been built since the erection of the main part of the edifice. It is divided from top to bottom into three compartments, by two rows of quatrefoils, and the middle compartment is subdivided into two divisions, by another row of quatrefoils.<sup>1</sup> Over the entrance into the church, there is a large window, divided by four mullions into five lights, the upper part being ramified into hexagonal tracery. On each side of this window there are two niches, canopied, terminating pyramidically, with crockets, in a trefoil head. These niches have, at some former period, been enriched with statues. There are six mock windows on each side of the tower, under pointed arches, and with hexagonal tracery: these windows are composed throughout of stone quatrefoils, giving the whole a most elegant appearance. The buttresses terminate at the windows of the belfrey in quadrangular prisms, the finials ending in a point, with crockets on the angles. The battlements are peculiarly elegant, being formed of open tabernacle work, and terminating at the corners of the tower in lofty pinnacles of the most delicate

<sup>1</sup> The quatrefoil was an imitation of the primrose, which, being one of the first flowers of the spring, was considered as the harbinger of revived nature, and was adopted by our church architects to signify, emblematically, that the gospel, the harbinger of peace and immortality, was there preached. The trefoil was the emblem of the Trinity.

workmanship, the finials ending in a point, the angles ornamented with crockets, and each pinnacle surmounted with a vane.

This tower is the admiration of every beholder, but more especially of those who have any taste for architectural elegance. The site of the church is indeed peculiarly favourable to its being seen to the greatest advantage; the spectator looking at it through Hammet-Street, as a vista, at the end of which he sees it, with its beautiful proportions and ornaments, its lofty battlements and pinnacles, majestically towering above all the surrounding objects.<sup>1</sup>

The height of the tower, from the ground to the cornice, is one hundred and twenty-one feet, and of the pinnacles, thirty-two feet, making in the whole one hundred and fifty-three feet. From its top there is a most extensive and delightful prospect of the rich vale of Taunton-Dean, which may justly be described as "a land flowing with milk and honey." The view embraces the seats of the neighbouring gentry, the windings of the river Tone, the spires and steeples of numerous village churches, the beautiful scenery of the Blackdown, Pickridge, and Cotheleston hills, the pillar at Burton-Pynsent,<sup>2</sup> Glastonbury tor, and Alfred's tower, at Stourhead, built by the late Mr. Hoare.

<sup>1</sup> A fine etching of this superb structure was made from actual admeasurement, in the year 1806, by A. P. Moore, of London, an ingenious artist, who died shortly after. The plate is now destroyed, and the etchings are become very scarce and valuable.—A few of the remaining copies may be had of Mr. Poole, printer, Taunton.

<sup>2</sup> This pillar was erected, by the late earl of Chatham, as a memorial of his respect for sir William Pynsent, who, without any personal knowledge of him, but merely from the high opinion he had of his political character, had left him the property at Burton.

The tower is furnished with a peal of six deep-toned bells, and with chimes,<sup>1</sup> which play every three hours.

The inside of the church measures ninety-eight feet in length, by eighty-six feet in breadth in the widest part; and from the termination of that part to the communion table fifty feet in length, contracting first into fifty-six, and then into seventeen feet in breadth. The roof of the middle aisle is well worthy of the notice of the curious observer. In the centre of this aisle stand the reading desk and pulpit, beautifully enriched with carved work. In some of the windows are the remains of ancient painted glass.

This church is adorned with a fine and well-toned organ, built by subscription in 1709:<sup>2</sup> it is neatly and commodiously pewed, and with the galleries is calculated to hold a very numerous congregation.<sup>3</sup>

The records<sup>4</sup> of the parish are repositied in the north-

<sup>1</sup> June 2d, 1711, a new clock and chimes put up in St. Mary Magdalen's tower.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 3d, 1709, the organ lately built in St. Mary Magdalen's church, was opened.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.*

<sup>3</sup> The old tattered colours of the 33d regiment of foot, under which they were engaged in several actions, during the revolutionary war with North-America, are hung up in the chancel of this church. On the arrival of that regiment in this town, after the peace of 1783, they had new colours presented to them, which were consecrated here, and the old ones deposited in the vestry. The actions in which the 33d regiment was engaged under these colours in America, were those of Brooklyn, in Long Island, Aug. 27th, 1776; Brandywine, Sept. 11th, 1777; German-Town, Oct. 4th, 1777; Freefield, on the retreat from Philadelphia, June 28th, 1777; Camden, under Lord Cornwallis, Aug. 16th, 1780; Guilford, March 15th, 1781; and in the defences of York-Town, 1781.

<sup>4</sup> Among these records, there is an old church-book, in which

east part of the church, where there is a small vestry-room. The apartment over the porch, called the

are the following remarkable charges, and a curious inventory of the plate then belonging to the church :—

July 1, 1688. Paid for ringing on the thanksgiving-day for the birth of the prince of Wales, two pounds.

Jan. 12, 1689. Paid Hillard (the parish sexton) for burying the church plate, two shillings and six-pence.

The weight and inscriptions of the communion plate are as follow :—

1. One large silver flagon, weighing seventy-seven oz. one dwt. having this inscription : “ November the 20th, 1639. The gifte of Mrs. Grace Portman to the parish of Taunton Magdelen, to bee used at the communion for ever.” Over this inscription there is engraven a castle in an escutcheon. On the top of the cover there is I. H. S. surrounded by a glory, and on the bottom the initials G. P. between which is the Portman crest, a fleur-de-lys, under which is the date, 1639.

2. 3. Two silver flagons, gilt, one weighing forty-three oz. and five dwts. the other weighing forty-four oz. ten dwts. having this inscription on each : *Ecclie parochiali Stæ. Mariæ Magdalenzæ de Taunton, ibi natus educatus Guil. Smyth, S. T. P. coll. Wadhams, Oxon. nuper guardianus, in sacros ejus usus donavit. 1639.* Under this inscription is the castle, as on the large flagon, and on the covers are the letters I. H. S. surrounded by a glory.

4. 5. Two silver chalices, gilt, one weighing twenty oz. ten dwts. the other twenty oz. fifteen dwts. having this inscription on each, “ *Deo et ecclesie sacrum. Robertus Hill, Londinensis, olim hujus parochie alumnus, dedit hanc calicem pie memorie ergo.*” Under this inscription is the castle as before. One of these chalices is dated October 4th, 1630 ; the other October 25th, 1639. On the bottom is “ *Burgus et villa de Taunton.*” The covers of these chalices have on their tops the letters, I. H. S. surrounded by a glory, and weigh, one eight oz. ten dwts. the other nine oz.

6. A silver salver, weighing sixteen oz. two dwts. with this inscription, surrounding an engraving of the castle, “ *Christo et ecclesie sacra. Burgus et villa de Taunton. Patinam hanc pub-*

*sanctum sanctorum*, has not for time immemorial been appropriated to any religious or parochial use. The inclosed part on the north-west, called the consistory, is used by the archdeacon of Taunton, when he holds his visitation here.

The vicarage of Taunton St.-Mary-Magdalen is in the patronage of Edward Berkeley Portman, esq. of Bryanston-house, in the county of Dorset.

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LIST OF THE VICARS OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN,  
TAUNTON.<sup>1</sup>

When registers were first kept in this parish, ———  
Dowel was vicar. He was succeeded by

Thomas Woodland, Oct. 1568. He died 1604.

John Goodwin, D. D. 1604.

Edward Clark, March, 1628. He is said to have been a pious and learned man, and was succeeded by George Newton, Jan. 1631.

He was a native of Devonshire, and was born in 1602. He began his ministry at Bishop's-Hull, near Taunton, and was presented to this vicarage by sir William Portman and Mr. Robert

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lico sumptu obtulerunt hujusce ecclesiæ guardiani, in festo paschæ, anno Domini, 1699."

7. 8. Two silver alms plates, one weighing nine oz. eleven dwts. the other nine oz. thirteen dwts. inscribed "Taunton Saint-Mary-Magdalen communion plate."

The whole of this plate is deposited with the senior churchwarden, and is well and carefully preserved in strong leather cases, in a large chest.

<sup>1</sup> From the parish register of St. Mary Magdalen, and Dr. Toulmin's MSS.

The oldest register remaining of this parish for burials, begins June, 1558; for marriages, August, 1558; and for baptisms, February, 1558.

Hill. When the "Book of Sports" came out, by order of council, in the reign of Charles the first, and was commanded to be read in churches, he told his congregation, that he read this book as the commandments of men; and he then immediately read the 20th chapter of Exodus, as the commandments of God; but as these happened to be contradictory to each other, he acquainted the people, they were at liberty to choose which they liked best. In the time of the civil commotions, when Taunton became the seat of war, he spent a year or two at St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire, and preached in the abbey church there; but some time after the famous siege was raised, he returned to his charge, with two or three other ministers who had accompanied him in his absence.\* His preaching was plain, profitable, and successful. He was eminent for his meekness and prudence, and kept out of Taunton those divisions that did so much mischief in other places. In 1654, he was, by ordinance of parliament, one of the assistants to the commissioners for ejecting scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers and schoolmasters. By the act of uniformity he was deprived of his living; but after he was silenced, convinced that it was his duty to continue his ministry, he took care to preach at those times when he might be least exposed; but notwithstanding his caution, he was apprehended for preaching, and imprisoned for several years. After he obtained his liberty, he became the first pastor of

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\* In Morgan's *Phoenix Britannicus*, (vol i. p. 81, 83,) there is the following statement:—

"*St. Mary Magdalen, Aug. 6, 1646.*—Alexander Hill, of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, gent. to settle twenty pounds per annum, for ever, upon the church of Mary Magdalen aforesaid, for which the whole fine of one hundred ninety-two pounds eight shillings, is remitted."

To understand this, it is to be observed, that during the Cromwell usurpation, all royalists were termed malignants and delinquents, and were heavily fined. At Goldsmith's-hall, in London, there sat commissioners for compositions with delinquents, who purchased, by this means, a revenue for increasing the maintenance of the ministers of the church.

the congregation at Paul's meeting, in Paul-street, in this town, sometime between 1672 and 1677. He died June 12, 1681, aged 79. His works were, "An Exposition and Notes on the 17th chapter of John," folio; "The Christian's character epitomised, a sermon on Psalm xci. v. 16." "A sermon at the funeral of Mr. Joseph Alleyne, and an account of his life;" "A sermon at the funeral of lady Farewel;" and "A thanksgiving sermon, on the 11th of May."

**Emanuel Sharpe, April, 1663.**

The father of this gentleman, dying in possession of the rectory of Badialton, left him the advowson, of which he was deprived till the restoration, and his family, consisting of a wife and five children, were forced to spin for a livelihood. During the Cromwell usurpation he wandered up and down Devonshire, teaching school at Dipford, Ugbrook, and Dartmouth. A great man offered him preferment if he would give up his principles, but he refused it on such terms. He retired at last to Marldon, which is a chapelry belonging to the vicarage of Painton, where he found quiet and support until the restoration, when he not only enjoyed Badialton, but obtained this vicarage. He died 1679, and was buried in the chancel of the church. Walker says he was a learned man, of a sober and very exemplary conversation.

**William Cross, B. D. February, 1679. Buried in November, 1683.**

**Walter Harte, M. A. November, 1683.**

He was also fellow of Pembroke college, Oxford; prebendary of Wells; and canon of Bristol. Refusing to take the oaths at the revolution, he lost all his preferments; and retiring to Kentbury, in Berkshire, he remained there till his death, February 10, 1736, at the great age of 95.\* He was regarded as a principal pillar of

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\* He had a son of both his names, who was author of a collection of poems, with many curious emblematical engravings, called "The Amaranth," printed in 1767, in an octavo volume. He was a canon of Windsor, and is better known for his "History of the Life of Gustavus Adolphus," a work very valuable for the variety and authenticity of the materials which are there collected, but which



the nonjuring cause. It is a remarkable circumstance, and deserving of being perpetuated, as conferring equal honour on all the parties, that the three successors of bishop Ken, the great friend of Mr. Harte, Kidder, Hooper, and Wynn, all contrived that he should receive the profits of his prebend of Wells, so long as he lived.

There are two engraved portraits of Mr. Harte, the first, when he was in his 39th year, 1685, engraved by Hibbart, after Zelman, and the other, inscribed "MACARIUS," a small head-piece, in his son's book, called "The Amaranth."

**Richard Doble, 1690. Resigned 1695.**

**Nathaniel Markwick, Oct. 1695. Resigned 1703.**

He was author of two volumes of tracts on the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, the Apocalyptic Visions, &c. He was esteemed a man of extraordinary piety, and is said to have had no other motive for resigning his vicarage, than his inability to effect the spiritual improvement of his parishioners to the extent of his wishes.

**Thomas Gale, April, 1703. Buried October, 1727.**

**John Boswell, A. M. October, 1727.**

This gentleman was descended from the family of the Boswells, in Gloucestershire, and was born at Dorchester, Jan. 23, 1698. He was educated at Abbey-Milton school, in Dorsetshire, under the Rev. George Marsh; was entered of Baliol college, Oxford, and a commoner in the same house. He did not take his bachelor's degree till 1720, being called away from college to be tutor to lord Kinnaird. He took his master's degree at St. John's college, Cambridge; was ordained deacon by Dr. Potter, bishop of Oxford, in Christ-Church, Oxford, and priest, at Wells, by Dr. Hooper, bishop of Bath and Wells. He was presented to the living of St. Mary Magdalen, by Henry Portman, esq. in October, 1727. His other preferment was a prebend in the cathedral church of

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much disappointed the expectation of the public, in respect of the style and manner in which it is written. But the learning and amiable qualities of Mr. Harte, added to his filial piety, give the *man* a high place in the estimation of those whose judgments may dispose them not to think so favourably of the *author*.—*Noble's Granger*, vol. iii. p. 147.

**Wells.** He died in June, 1756, aged 58.—In the year 1730, he published a sermon, on Psalm xvi. 7, preached on the anniversary of king Charles the second's restoration. In 1738, there appeared from his pen the first part and first volume of "A Method of Study; or an Useful Library:" containing short directions, and a catalogue of books, for the study of several valuable parts of learning, namely, geography, chronology, history, classical-learning, natural philosophy, painting, architecture, and heraldry. The author professes that his view, in this work, was to assist poor clergymen in their studies, and to induce young gentlemen to look into books. The plan he pursued was to point out the chief particulars necessary to be known in several useful parts of learning, and to prescribe a *method* for acquiring them. To this end he recommends such books as treat of them, lays down the order in which they should be read, attempts a character of each, and points out their peculiar excellencies. In 1743, Mr. Boswell gave to the public the second part and second volume of his "Method of Study." The study of divinity is the subject of this volume; and the particular topics discussed are the rise of the Hebrew tongue, the duties of the ministerial functions, natural and revealed religion: the chapter on the last head includes a discourse on the heathen oracles, and miracles, and some remarks on Mr. Sale's "Strictures" on Dr. Prideaux's "Life of Mahomet;" and it is followed by a dissertation on the resemblance between the sacred and profane account of things. Mr. Boswell designed a third volume, on the reading of the scriptures, and on the doctrine and constitution of the church of England, with a dissertation on the Assyrian empire; but never published it. This work shews the author's learning; but the utility of it is now, in a great measure, superseded, by the progress of knowledge, and the publication, since its appearance, of many treatises on the different parts of science, much superior to those which it recommends. Mr. Boswell had the reputation of being a good scholar, and excelled in a proper and graceful pronunciation in the pulpit and the desk.

**William Chafin**, Nov. 1756. Resigned June, 1803.

**Francis Hunt Clapp**, July 1803. Died Oct. 1818.

**Henry Bower**, M. A. chaplain to the earl of Roseberry, April, 1819.

## Monumental Inscriptions

### IN ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S CHURCH.

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Sacred to the Memory of  
 Major-General ROBERT DOUGLAS,  
 Who died June 7th, 1798, Aged 54,  
 Sincerely regretted by all his Relatives & Friends.  
 After serving his Country Forty Years  
 In all quarters of the Globe,  
 He fell a Victim to the fatal effects of Climate.  
 His Remains lie interred near this Spot.  
 Also to the Memory of his Son, JOHN DOUGLAS,  
 Captain in the 54th Regt. of Foot,  
 Who died of the Yellow Fever, at St. Kitt's, July 11th, 1796,  
 In the 22d Year of his Age.  
 This tribute of gratitude is erected by her  
 Who lives to deplore the loss  
 Of the best of Husbands  
 And a beloved Son.

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Within a Vault in the adjoining Church-yard,  
 On the east side, are deposited the mortal Remains  
 Of the Rev. THOMAS COOKES, Rector of Notgrove,  
 And late of Barbourne-House, in the County of Worcester.  
 He departed this life in the 74th Year of his age,  
 On the first of December, 1809.  
 Those of the present generation, who recollect him while living,  
 Will, in the remembrance of his many benevolent actions,  
 Feel for the loss that has been sustained by the poor  
 And the distressed;  
 Who invariably recognized in him their unaffected Friend  
 And disinterested Patron.  
 And may those who are yet unborn,  
 And to whom the virtues of the dear Object  
 Whom we here commemorate were unknown,  
 Reap from the perusal of this tablet  
 The only advantage of the comfortable and most consoling truth,  
 That a Life,  
 Which was spent in charitable and virtuous actions,  
 Was at length, in the fulness of years,  
 Closed by a Death  
 Full of Hope and pious Resignation.

In Memory of  
**GEORGE HART, Esq.**

R. Admiral of the White Squadron of H. M. Fleet,  
 Who departed this Life 28th April, 1812, in his 60th year;  
 In his Profession, zealous, intrepid, humane,  
 A fond Father, an affectionate Husband, a pious Christian.

Also of **MARY-ANNE,**

His fourth Daughter,

Who departed this Life on the 8th June, 1813,

In her 18th Year,

After a lingering Illness,

Which her amiable Disposition and pious Mind  
 Enabled her to bear with Patience and Resignation.

Also of **HENRY-CHICHESTER,**

His only Son,

Who on the 30th June, 1813, and the 24th Year of his Age,

A Lt. of the Royal Navy and first of H. M. S. Venus,

Was cut off, in the Execution of his Duty,

In Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes;

Beloved and regretted by his Brother Officers,

His Ship's Company, and all who knew him.

This is erected

By **ANNA**, the Widow and Mother of the deceased,  
 A feeble but sincere Token of her Affection and Regret.

Also of **ANNE HART**, the Wife of

Rear-Admiral Hart, who died the 31st of March, 1815,

Aged 60 Years.

Sacred to the Memory of  
**WILLIAM SWEET,**

Who, after a long and painful illness,  
 Which he bore with Christian fortitude and resignation,

Departed this Life,

April 20th, 1803, Aged 56.

He was an affectionate Husband,

And a tender Father.

Also of his two Sons,

**WILLIAM** and **THOMAS,**

Whom it pleased Providence

To take from this World, just as they were entering

Upon its active duties.

William died August 1st, 1807, Aged 21.

Thomas died Sept. 22d, 1808, Aged 20.

**ANNE**, the Wife of **WILLIAM DE VISME,**  
 Of Hatch-Beauchamp, in the County of Somerset, Esq.  
 She died the 15th July, 1799, aged 27 Years.

Sacred to the Memory  
 Of the Reverend MATTHEW WARREN,  
 A most venerable Divine;  
 Learned without pride,  
 Pious without Ostentation, Prudent without Subtilty,  
 Facetious without rudeness,  
 Grave without austerity, Zealous without Fanaticism;  
 Who, descended from the ancient Earls of Warren,  
 Embraced with a most cordial affection,  
 His friends, his neighbours, and the whole Church of Christ.  
 He was of a graceful aspect,  
 Of a polite and gentle disposition, and of the sweetest manners.  
 Elegance, Candour, and Modesty,  
 Ran through his Discourses.  
 Born at Otterford in the County of Devon,  
 Educated at Oxford,  
 Taunton was a long time the Field of his Labours,  
 Where he was Pastor of a Presbyterian Congregation.  
 He also instructed  
 Many young Men in Piety and sacred Learning;  
 Which double offices  
 He discharged faithfully, diligently, soberly,  
 Peaceably, and with much praise,  
 Until the 14th day of June, 1706,  
 When God called him to his heavenly Rest.

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Sacred to the Memory of  
 WILLIAM FRAUNCEIS, Esq.  
 Son of John Fraunceis Gwyn, Esq. and Sarah, his wife,  
 Of Ford-Abbey,  
 In the County of Devon,  
 Who departed this life  
 November 2d, 1815,  
 Aged 41 Years.

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ELIZABETH and HANNAH GARDNER,  
 Daughters of John Gardner, Minister of the Gospel, Bath.  
 Interred together, August 18th, 1665.

Here lie two plants twisted by death in one,  
 When that was dead could this survive alone?  
 They were heav'n ripe, and therefore gone, we find  
 Ripe fruit fall off while raw doth stick behind.  
 They are not lost, but in those joys remain,  
 Where friends may see and joy in them again.

(Their age)

1. Here Learn to Die betimes Least happILLie,
2. Ere yee begIn to LIVE ye CoMe to Dye.

Sacred to the Memory of  
**ANN,**  
 Third Daughter of Robert Ord,  
 Late Lord Chief Baron of Scotland,  
 By Mary, eldest daughter of Sir John Darnell, Knt.  
 And Wife of **ANGUS MACDONALD, M. D.**  
 Of this Place.

In whom were combined  
 With the utmost Suavity of Manners,  
 Piety without Bigotry,  
 Good Sense without Affectation.  
 Endeared to all who knew her,  
 She was taken from this World  
 The 16th of October, 1801, aged 54 Years.  
 This humble Tribute to her Memory  
 Is erected by her Affectionate Husband.

Also in Commemoration of  
**KENNETH MACKENZIE,**  
 Of Dolphinton in Scotland, Advocate,  
 A Young Man  
 Endeared by his amiable Qualities  
 And public Virtues to all who knew him.  
 He departed this life at the House  
 Of his Uncle, **DR. MACDONALD,**  
 The 23d of November, 1805, Aged 28 Years.

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Sacred to the Memory of the  
**Rev. FRANCIS HUNT CLAPP,**  
 Vicar of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalen,  
 Who departed this life  
 October 19th, 1818, Aged 59 Years.

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Major-General **ROBERT DOUGLAS,**  
 Who departed this life the 7th of June, 1798, aged 54 years.  
 Also the remains of **ANNA MARIA,**  
 Daughter of the above,  
 Who died May 3d, 1808, aged 24.  
 Also the remains of **Mrs. ANN TYNDALL,**  
 Aunt to the above Anna Maria Douglas,  
 Who died June 24th, 1809, aged 54.

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**JOHN BUNCOMBE,**  
 Apothecary, of this parish, who departed this life January the 8th,  
 1785, aged 61 Years. Also **JOAN,** wife of the above **JOHN**  
**BUNCOMBE,** who departed this life Dec. 5th, 1787, aged 63 years.

M. S.  
 GEORGII LANGLEY,  
 Rufi et Elizabethæ Uxoris  
 Filii unici,  
 Adolescentis eximiis virtutibus ornati,  
 Quippe cui  
 Ad Christi Domini nostri instituta scite colendum,  
 Ad Christiani hominis officia honeste obeundum,  
 Nec indoles bona nec labor  
 Deerat pius.  
 Cum quibuscunque erat una,  
 Ipse, velut proveciori ætate, vitam instituebat ;  
 Sociis melioris notæ se gerebat facilem ;  
 Cum ingentis perditis strenue conflictabatur,  
 Nec in ea re animus  
 Unquam vacillabat.  
 Hunc juvenem pium et propositi tenacem  
 Ætas, sodales, emolumenta, mores, tempora,  
 Haud facerent  
 Ut Cælum hodierna peteret stultitia,  
 Aut mente quati posset solida.  
 In Arte Chirurgica adeo profecit,  
 Ut omnes uno ore omnia bona dicere ;  
 Omnes fortunas eorum laudare,  
 Qui gnatum, eheu ! haberent  
 Tali ingenio præditum.  
 Abi, Lector,  
 Et, ad hujus egregii adolescentis  
 Exemplar,  
 Disce vivere,  
 Disce mori.  
 Obiit 13<sup>o</sup> Calend. Januarii, 1753,  
 Anno Ætatis 22<sup>o</sup>.

(IN ENGLISH.)

Sacred to the Memory  
 Of GEORGE LANGLEY,  
 Only Son  
 Of Rufus Langley and Elizabeth his Wife ;  
 A Youth adorned with extraordinary Virtues,  
 And one in whom  
 Neither a good disposition nor pious exertions  
 Were wanting  
 For a due observance of the ordinances of our Lord,  
 And a laudable discharge of the Duties of a Christian.  
 In whatever company he was,  
 He conducted himself like one of a more advanced age ;  
 And while he readily complied with the wishes of the virtuous,

He bravely resisted the importunities of the profligate;  
 Nor in this respect did his heart ever waver,  
 Youth, company, advantage, the times, the manners,  
 Were all equally incapable

Of inducing this pious and steady young man  
 To insult Heaven with the folly of the present days,  
 Or of shaking his firm Resolution.

In the Art of Surgery he made such Proficiency,  
 That all with one accord said every thing in his praise;  
 And all extolled the good Fortune of those

Who had, alas! a Son  
 Endowed with such a Disposition.

Reader, go, and after  
 The Example

Of this excellent Youth,  
 Learn to live,  
 Learn to die.

He departed this Life the 20th of Dec. 1753,  
 In the 22d year of his Age.

---

(ON A BRASS PLATE.)

Here Christopher Saunders daughter sleeps under this marble stone,  
 Whose Christian lyfe and godly end to God and world is known.  
 She Elenor by name was call'd, and eke was Lewis Pope's Wyfe,  
 With whome in all humility and love she led her Lyfe.  
 Admidst the bitter panges of death at no tyme did she cease,  
 To parents and to husband both bequeathing love and peace;  
 And strengthned she above all strength did suffer paines with joye,  
 Embracing Christ, bid world adieu, but kept her unborne boy.  
 Obiit 12 Decemb. 1595.

SIMON SAUNDERS, Gentleman,  
 Of Taunton, who deceased the first of Maye, anno Domini 1591.

Vivit post funere virtus.

Thy corpse in grave enclosed,  
 Cannot thy deeds commend:  
 Thy hundred pound by will disposed,  
 Shall to the worlde's end.  
 Thou, living, cladst the naked back,  
 Thou, dying, didst provide;  
 For ever to supply this lack,  
 At thy appointed tyde.  
 God grant that this thy bounty rare  
 May good disposers find:  
 Not slothful to perform this care  
 According to thy mind.



## ELIZABETH,

The wife of SIMON SAUNDERS, who departed this life the 5th Day of July, 1735, aged 37 years.

Also CHARLES STUBBS,

Who departed this life the 1st Day of April, 1769, aged 52 Years.

Bless'd be the Lord for all, my Husband dear,  
 Bless'd be thy Memory for thy Love sincere;  
 With Patience, Mildness, Charity possess,  
 For every Goodness by thy friends caress'd.  
 When all thy Virtues to my mind I call,  
 I cannot but lament thy sudden fall;  
 Man's life is measured by his works, not days,  
 And life Immortal crowns all Mortal Praise.

Here under lyeth buried the body of  
 RICHARD HUISH, Esq.

Borne in Taunton, and anciently descended of the familie of the Huysches of Denysford in the Countie of Somerset. He founded the Hospital in Mawdelyn Lane in Tawnton for thirteene poor men, begunne by himselfe, in his live tyme, and finished by his executors after his death; and, (for reliefe of the said poore men) he gave by his last will one hundred and three pounds by the yeare for ever; yssuing out of certaine howses and tenements in the Black Fryars, London, and also by his sayd will, he gave one hundred pounds a yeare for ever out of the sayd tenements for the maintenance of fyve schollars of his name of Huysch and kindred at one or both of the universitys of Oxford or Cambridge, and dyed in the true faythe of Christ Jesus, xxiii. day of February, anno Domini 1615.

Orate pro anima JOHANNIS TOOSE, Mercatoris, Tantonie, qui obiit 19 die mensis Aprilis, anno Salutis, 1502, cujus anime propicietur Deus, Amen.

*That is,*—Pray for the Soul of John Toose of Taunton, merchant, who died the 19th of April, 1502; on whose Soul God have Mercy! Amen.

This Inscription is on the first Stone in the Middle Aile going from the belfrey, and is the oldest in the church except some few partly covered by the pews.

H. E. S.

Corpus JOHANNIS,

Filli Rogeri HOARE, Generosi, et Bettie Uxoris ejus, obiit 1<sup>o</sup> Januarij 1739. Hic jacet etiam dicta BETTIA, quæ obiit 17<sup>o</sup> Sept. 1742, Ætat. 36. Hic pariter requiescit corpus HENRICI HOARE, filii natu maximi dicti Rogeri et Bettie, obiit 19 Januarij, 1742, Ætat. 17.

## H. S. I.

**Vir Reverendus JOHANNES BOSWELL, A. M.** præbendarius Wellensis et hujus ecclesiæ vicarius ; quem pastorem attente sedulum probeque fidelem deflent parochiani, filium pientissimum et defensorem eximium ecclesia luget Anglicana, nec non scriptorem apprime elegantem, summeque literatum. Obiit Anno Salutis 1756, Ætatis 58.

*That is,*—Here lies the Reverend John Boswell, A. M. prebendary of Wells and vicar of this church, whom his parishioners lament as a diligent and faithful pastor ; and the church of England mourns as a pious son, an excellent defender, and a most elegant and learned writer. He departed this life in the year 1756, in the 58th year of his age.

**JOHN MALLACK,**

Of Fullands, gent. who departed this life November 23d, 1678.

Also **ROGER MALLACK,**

Fuller, of this town, who died the 26 of March, aged 24, in 1724.

Also **ELIZABETH and SUSANNA,**

His daughters, who died the same year.

Also **SARAH BOSWELL,**

Wife of Roger Mallack, who died June 14th, 1741, aged 75 years,

And likewise relict of the Rev. John Boswell, late vicar of . Taunton St. Mary Magdalen. .

Also **SARAH PEPPIN,**

Wife of Sydenham Peppin, surgeon, of this town, and daughter of Roger Mallack, who died September 7th, 1782, aged 60 years.

Also the above-nam'd **SYDENHAM PEPPIN,**

Who departed this life June 10th, 1787, aged 70 years.

June 18th, 1787, Mary Boswell removed her mother out of this vault.

Hic jacet dominus **JOSEPHUS ALLEINE,**

Holocaustum, Tauntonenses, et Deo et vobis.

Here Mr. Joseph Alleine lies,

To God and you a Sacrifice.

To the Memory of Mr. **EDWARD CLARK,**

Master of Arts, late the godly learned pastor of this church, who died Dec. 31st, and ANN, his wife, who died 17th of the same month, 1630.

Not that they need a monument to keep  
 Theyr names from mouldring while theyr bodies sleepe,  
 Wrapt up in dark oblivion ; not that they  
 Need trust to statues, pillars, poesy,  
 Theyr dead memorial from the dust to raise,  
 As if theyr persons had outlived theyr praise ;  
 Some friends erecting this, have signified  
 Theyr love expired not with them when they dyed.

Gulielmus, Filius Henrici GERVAIS,  
De Taunton, Generosi, obiit nono die Augusti, Anno Domini, 1684.  
Ætat. suæ 18.

GEORGE ATWOOD, B. D.  
Archdeacon of Taunton, died 15th Dec. A. D. 1752, Ætat. 68.  
MARY,  
The wife of GEORGE ATWOOD, B. D. Archdeacon of Taunton,  
died January 29th, A. D. 1733, Ætat. 41.

EMANUEL SHARP,  
Who died the 20th of January, 1678, after he had been Vicar of this  
town 16 Years, aged 70 Years.

ELIZABETH,  
His wife, who died the 19th of March, 1689.  
MARGARITE,  
His eldest daughter, who died the 14th of June, 1684.

Depositum  
BERNARDI SMITH,  
Hujusce Oppidi his  
Prætoris, Qui obiit  
XXI Die Mensis  
Augusti, Anno Domini,  
MDCXCVI,  
Et Ætatis suæ  
Quinquagesimo  
Secundo, hic  
Requiescit in Spo  
Beatæ resurrectionis.

(That is.)

Here rest in hope of a blessed resurrection  
The remains of BERNARD SMITH,  
Twice mayor of this town,  
Who died the 21st of August, 1696, in the 52 year of his age.

CHARITY SMITH,  
Wife of the said BERNARD SMITH, who departed this life the 8th  
day of February, 1715, Ætat. suæ 73. She was the daughter  
and last child of the Reverend Emanuel Sharp, who was Vicar  
of this Town 16 Years.

MARY SMITH,  
Daughter of the said BERNARD and CHARITY SMITH, who departed  
this Life the 8th day of Sept. Anno Dom. 1714, Ætat. suæ 31.

WILLIAM MILES,  
Of this Parish, Mercer, who departed this life the 30th day of  
April, 1767, aged 31 years.  
Likewise the Wife of the above William Miles, who departed this  
life June the 11th, 1780, aged 42 years.

Subter hunc lapidem sepultæ jacent reliquiæ  
**MARIÆ ELIZABETHÆ ROSÆ DE CLERCQ**, quæ obiit  
 vigesimo die Novembris, anno Domini 1797, ætatis suæ 22.

R. I. P.

Cara vixit, moriens plorata est.

(*That is.*)

Under this stone are interred  
 The remains of **MARY ELIZABETH ROSE DE CLERCQ**,  
 Who died the 20th of Nov. 1797, in the 22d year of her age.

May she rest in peace !

She lived beloved, and dying was lamented.

**MAURICE HAMMOND**,

Of this towne, woollen-drapeer, who departed this life the 14th day  
 of December, anno domini 1667.

Here lies, ye friends, behold it and condole,

A body worne out by an active soul ;

The sheath cut thorough by too keen a blade,

Which heaven hath wrapt up till a new be made.

**WILLIAM MURRAY**,

Of Hydwood, in the County of Annandale, North Britain, who  
 departed this life the 10th Day of April, 1719, aged 28 years.

Like to a spreading rose in undue time,

Pluckt by the hand of death when in his prime,

So was this youth, whose friends do sadly mourn,

He cannot unto them again return.

But Oh ! where should spirits be but above,

Eternally to praise the God of love ?

Also **JAMES MURRAY**,

The brother of the above-said William Murray, who departed this  
 life the 29th day of April, 1756, aged 58 years.

**THOMAS NEWMAN, N. P.**

Who died the 27th Day of August, 1727, aged 69 years.

**ELIZABETH**,

The wife of Thomas Newman, N. P. of Hull-Bishops, who died  
 the 15th Day of August, 1715.

Also **ELIZABETH**,

The daughter of the said Thomas Newman, who died the 19th of  
 March, 1722.

Move not this stone

For any one ;

For 'tis our request

To be at rest,

'Till the great Day

We must away

Together go

To bliss or woe.

**THOMAS HANCOCK,**

Son of the late Thomas and Hannah Hancock, who departed this life April 7th, 1794, aged 54 years.

Also **HANNAH HANCOCK,**

Daughter of the above Thomas Hancock, who departed this life May 25th, 1794, in the 21st year of her age.

Also **BETTY HANCOCK,**

The wife of the above Thomas Hancock, who departed this life April 27, 1795, aged 54 years.

Also **MARY HARMAN,**

Daughter of the above Thomas and Betty Hancock, who departed this life December 26, 1795, in the 22d year of her age.

**ELIZABETH,**

The wife of Mr. Joshua Driver, and daughter of Mr. John Yard, who departed this life Feb. 15th, 1715, *Ætat.* xxii.

Also the said **JOHN YARD**

Of this town, twice mayor of this corporation, who departed this life the 15th August, anno dom. 1721, *Ætat.* 64.

Also Mrs. **SARAH YARD,**

Daughter of the said Mr. John Yard, died Aug. 16th, 1747, aged 42.

**ROBERT MORE,**

Who was shot in the head, and departed this life the 8th day of May, 1645.

Also **ROBERT CARVIN,**

Who departed this life the 1st day of September, 1655.

Also **MARY HICKES,**

The wife of Richard Hicckes, of Hull-Bishops,

Who was just to all, charitable to the poor,

Last Mary Hicckes first Mary More ;

Who died the 3d day of November, 1644.

Here **MARGARET CARVIN'S** reliques lye,

Whose aged soul Christ home did take,

To reign with him : lo ! all must dye,

And to their final judgment wake.

Reader, prepare, for thus must thou

To death's impartial sceptre bow.

*Obiit* xix die Feb. anno Domini 1679, *Ætatis* suæ 84.

**MATTHEW HICKES**

Of this town, who departed this life on the 25th day of December, 1666.

Our glasse was quickly run, lo ! here we lie,  
To tell spectators none's too young to die.

**ISAT,**

Late wife of William Lantrowe, who deceased the 1st day of June, 1624.

Also WILLIAM LANTROWE

Of Taunton, Vintner, husband of the said Isat, who deceased the 21st day of August, anno Dom. 1644.

Also WILLIAM LANTROWE,

Merchant, sonne of William Lantrowe, who deceased the 29th-  
Of September, anno Domini 1654

MARY,

Second wife of George Newton, Pastor of the church in this place;  
was born at St. Alban's, in the county of Hertford, and died in  
this town December 31st, 1645.

Were there no graves in Alban's? Could not hee  
That gave thee ayre, spare earth to cover thee?  
Had she that first possest thy husband's bed,  
Possest thy grave where thou wast born and bred,  
And forced thee down to this remoter place,  
To seek out her's? A very equal case;  
Thy town to her, to thee her's burial gave,  
And thus you two did but exchange a grave.

Hic quoque jacet corpus

GEORGII NEWTON,

Artis Magistri, qui obiit 12 Junii, 1681, anno ætatis 79, postquam  
officium evangelistæ in hoc oppido per 50 annos fideliter præstiterat.

Non fictis mæstam lachrymis conspergite tumbam,

Pastoris vestri nam tegit ossa pii.

Vestra salutifero planxit peccata flagello,

Delicti sensu corda gravata levans.

Absolvit pensum, sancta et mercede recepta;

Nunc cæli regno, ut stella corusca, micat.

(IN ENGLISH.)

Here also lieth the body of

GEORGE NEWTON, M. A.

Who died the 12th of June, 1681, in the 79th year of his age, after  
he had faithfully discharged the duty of an evangelist for 50 years.

Sprinkle not this sad tomb with feigned tears,

For it covers the bones of your pious pastor;

Who chastised your offences with a salutary scourge,

While he raised the hearts which were pressed down with a  
sense of sin.

He hath finished his task, and having received a holy reward,  
Now shines, like a glittering star, in the kingdom of heaven.

WILLIAM BURD,

Town-clerk of Taunton, and deputy clerk of the castle, town, and  
lordship of Taunton and Taunton Dean, in the county of Somerset,  
who departed this life the 24th day of September, anno domini  
1716, Ætat. suæ 62.

**Mr. JOHN WHITMASH,**

Of this town, who departed this life the 5th day of May, anno Domini 1724, aged 71 years.

Also **ANN WHITMASH,**

Wife of the above-named John Whitmash, who departed this life May 26th, 1732, aged 67 years and 7 months.

Also **JOHN WHITMASH,**

Late of Batt's Place, gent. died 10th January, 1769, aged 79.

Also **ELIZABETH,**

The wife of John Whitmash, who departed this life June 1st, 1789, Aged 82 years.

Also **CHARLES COX,**

Currier, son-in-law to the above-named John and Ann Whitmash, who was mayor of this town in 1725, and departed this life March 12th, 1732, being then mayor the second time of Taunton St-Mary-Magdalen, aged 43 years and 4 months.

Also **EDITH,**

Wife of the above Charles Cox, who died May 21st, 1761, aged 66.

Also **CHARLES,**

Son of the above Charles and Edith Cox, who died Nov. 28th, 1787, aged 59.

Also **MARY,**

The wife of the aforesaid Charles Cox, died March 25, 1799, aged 73.

**JOHN WHITMASH, Esq. of Comeytrowe,**

Major Commandant of the Taunton Loyal Volunteers.

The awe and sorrow which his sudden death occasioned, not only to his immediate relatives, but to all who were acquainted with his name and character, afford the best proof of the high estimation in which he was held.

As an affectionate husband, a kind father, and truly generous and sincere friend, his loss will be long felt and lamented.

Pause, reader, and reflect that thou, like him, mayest pass in an instant, from the enjoyment of health and every comfort which this life can bestow, into an awful eternity.

He died 4th of May, 1801, aged 61 years.

**MARY,**

The wife of Thomas Grove, of Taunton, apothecary, who died the 6th day of October, 1664, ætatis sue 32.

Infantes quatuor peperit; tres morte perempti,

Quos secum ad summos hæc habet urna dies.

**JOHN PERIAM, Esq.**

Who departed this life 26th January, 1788, aged 72.

**MARTHA PERIAM,**

Widow of John Periam, Esq. who died January 15th, 1807, Aged 81 years.

**TOBIAS CHUDLEIGH, Gent.**

Who died 15th day of November, anno Domini 1659.

**MARY GREEN,**

Who departed this life January 11th, 1780, aged 50 years.

**Also ROBERT,**

Husband of the above Mary Green, who departed this life  
September 5th, 1789, aged 70 years.

**ELIZABETH FOLAQUIER,**

Who departed this life the 8th day January, 1741, aged 85 years.

**ROBERT,**

Son of Francis and Elizabeth Folaquier, of this town, who  
departed this life 22d day of November, 1742, aged 2 years.

**LEWIS,**

Son of Francis and Elizabeth Folaquier, who departed this life  
7th January, 1746, aged 5 years.

**FRANCIS FOLAQUIER, Esq.**

Father of the aforesaid Robert and Lewis, who departed this  
Life 20th of April, 1771, aged 63 years.

**Also ELIZABETH,**

The wife of the aforesaid Francis Folaquier, Esq. who departed  
this life the 29th of January, 1772, in the 57th year of her age.

**MARY,**

The daughter of the aforesaid, who departed this life 8th of  
September, 1772, aged 33 years.

**Also ELIZABETH,**

The daughter of the aforesaid, who departed this life 29th of  
August, 1782, aged 47 years.

**Also FRANCIS FOLAQUIER, Esq.**

Brother of the last-nam'd Elizabeth Folaquier, who departed this  
Life the 7th of June, 1811, aged 74 years.

**SAMUEL NORMAN,**

Fuller, of this town, who departed this life May 31st, 1751,  
aged 54 years.

**Also SARAH NORMAN,**

Wife of the above Samuel, who departed this life April 27th, 1756,  
aged 58 years.

**FRANCES,**

Wife of Mr. John Norman, died February 7th, 1793, aged 74 years.

**ANN,**

Wife of Samuel Norman, Esq. died Dec. 27th, 1801, aged 41 years.

**ALEXANDER HILL, Gent.**

Late of Taunton, sonne to William Hill of Pounseford, Esq.  
Who died the 14th day of December, in the year of our Lorde  
Christe 1613.

**FRANCIS NEWTON,**

Who departed this life November 14th, 1729, aged 61 years.

**Also FRANCIS,**

Son of the above Francis Newton, who departed this life May 25th,  
1731, aged 39 years.



MOSES COTTLE,

Who died 15th of November, 1789, aged 35 years.

Didst thou know him, reader ?

If thou didst not,

Know this ;

He was a tender husband,

A social friend, and an honest man.

SARAH DARE,

Spinster, who died November 22d, 1783, aged 49 years.

MARY DARE,

Spinster, who died June 17th, 1806, aged 80 years.

ANN DARE,

Spinster, who died April 17th, 1807, aged 81 years.

CATHARINE,

Wife of Francis Hobbart, of this town, gent. who died 20 July,  
1693, ætatis suæ 62.

Also the aforesaid FRANCIS HOBART, Gent.

Who was four times Mayor of this town : he died the 21st day  
of April, 1719, aged 87 years.

MARY,

Wife of Francis Hobbart, sen. of Bishop's-Hull, gent. who died  
9th of April, 1712, ætatis suæ 53.

Also the above-said FRANCIS HOBART, Sen.

Of Bishop's-Hull, gent. who died June 8th, 1718, ætatis suæ 60.

FRANCIS HOBART, Esq.

Who died February 8th, 1750, aged 36 years.

FRANCIS,

His son, died May 13th, 1761, aged 22.

And MARY,

His widow, July 31st, 1783, aged 70 years.

Sacred to the blessed Memory of

ROBERT GRAY, Esq.

Taunton bore him, London bred him,

Piety train'd him, virtue led him ;

Earth enrich'd him, heaven carest him,

Taunton blest him, London blest him.

This thankful town, that mindful city,

Share his piety and his pity.

What he gave, and how he gave it,

Ask the poor, and you shall have it.

Gentle reader, heaven may strike

Thy tender heart to do the like ;

And now thy eyes have read the story,

Give him the praise and heaven the glory.

Ætatis suæ 65, anno Domini 1635.

**ANN SPILLER,**

Wife of William Spiller, who died 21st June, 1771, aged 73 years.

**WILLIAM SPILLER,**

Who departed this life Dec. 29th 1795, in the 86th year of his age.

**BETTY SPILLER,**

The wife of Thomas Spiller, who departed this life the 10th of February, 1798, in the 66th year of her age.

Also **THOMAS SPILLER,**

Who died the 16th of May, 1810, aged 74.

Also **ANN HARCUMBE,**

Widow, who died 27th March, 1817, aged 74.

**EMANUEL MAYNARD,**

Of this town, sergc-maker, who died the 12th day of April, 1730, aged 44 years.

**MARY,** Wife of Emanuel Maynard,

Who died 16th November, 1751, aged 63 years.

**JOAN PROCTOR,**

Wife of Robert Proctor, who died 12th of May, 1684.

**HENRY PROCTOR,**

Died 10th day of March, 1696, aged 41 years.

Also **FRANCES,**

Wife of the above-said Henry Proctor, died 11th day of October, anno Domini 1732.

**HONOR CLITSOME,**

Wife of Robert Clitsome, of the parish of Wilton, she departed this life 1764, aged 56 years.

Also the above-nam'd **ROBERT CLITSOME,**

Who departed this life November 28th, 1776, aged 67 years.

**WILLIAM COLES, sen.**

Of this town, Fuller, who died July 2d, 1712, aged 45 years.

**ROBERT CLITSOME,**

Clothier, of Wilton, who died 17th of January, 1736, aged 61.

Also **ANN,**

His wife, who died 27th of March, 1751, aged 72.

Also **ANN COLES,**

Wife of the Rev. John Coles, daughter of the above Robert and Ann Clitsome, who departed this life 23d March, 1780, aged 73 years.

Also **JOHN CLITSOME,**

Surgeon, second son of the above-nam'd, who died Dec. 5th, 1778, aged 74 years.

Also **THOMAS CLITSOME COLES,**

Second son of the above John and Ann Coles, who departed this life April 5th, 1803, aged 52 years.

**ROBERT DOUGLASS,**

Of Bishop's-Hull, died November 20th, 1783, aged 55 years.

PETER CLIFFE, Gent.

Father of Walter Cliffe, bailiffe of the liberty of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, who departed this life July 7th, 1641.

SAMUEL BROWNE,

Of this town, gent. who died on the 30th of March 1712, aged 61.

Also AGNES,

Wife of the above Samuel Browne, who died June 1731,  
*Ætatis sue* 56.

JOHN ROBERTS,

Clerk, son-in-law of the above Agnes Browne, who died  
May 21st, 1775, aged 67.

MARY,

Widow of the above-nam'd John Roberts, clerk, who died 14th of  
November, 1779, aged 82.

Also Major-General JOHN ROBERTS,

Son of the above John and Mary Roberts, who died Member of  
this borough, the 28th of February, 1782, aged 53 years.

WILLIAM ROBERTS,

Who departed this life March 26th, 1797, aged 8 years.

Also Colonel CHARLES WEST ROBERTS,

Who departed this life April 27th, 1801, aged 71 years.

BETTY ROBERTS,

Widow of Major-General Roberts, M. P. for this borough, who  
died July 4th, 1808, aged 72.

This small tribute of respect and affection was erected by John  
and Ann Chamberlaine, 1808.

ALICE,

The wife of Samuel Whetcombe, gent. died March 20th,  
*anno Domini* 1654.

GEORGE LUCAS,

Son of Robert Lucas, of this parish, gent. who died  
24th May, 1717.

Also HANNAH LUCAS,

Daughter of the aforesaid Robert Lucas, of this town, gent. who  
departed this life July 22d, 1718.

HENRY FYSH, Esq.

Who departed this life May 31st, 1798, aged 75 years.

O safe from life, on that eternal shore,

Where sin and pain and sorrow are no more !

WILLIAM COURTNEY,

Of the parish of Taunton, who departed this life April 21st, 1674.

GEORGE COCKER, A. M.

Of East-Budleigh in the county of Devon, who departed this life  
January 8th, 1781, aged 53 years.

**RICHARD BICKNELL,**  
Clothier, of this town, who died June 20th, 1660.

Man is like a thing of nought ;  
His time passeth away like a shadow.

Also **ALDRED BICKNELL**, Gent.  
Who was twice mayor of this town, son of Richard Bicknell of this town, who departed this life on the 5th day of January, 1710, and was buried the 10th day of the same instant January, being in the 52d year of his age.

Also **DAVID BERRY**,  
Of this parish, who departed this life July 4th, 1654.  
I know that my Redeemer liveth.

Also **MARTHA**,  
The relict of the aforesaid David Berry, and since the wife and relict of Thomas Bradshaw, who died Feb. 8th, 1670.

**JOHN GRANT**,  
Of Taunton St. Mary, who departed this life Sept. 1st, 1653.

**JOHN HOSSAM**,  
Son of Martin Hossam of this town : he was buried June 21st, 1670.

**RACHEL SPENCER**,  
Daughter of Christopher Spencer of this town, salesman, who departed this life April 20th, 1750, aged 11 years.

Likewise **CHRISTOPHER SPENCER**,  
Father of the above Rachel, who departed this life Oct. 16th, 1752, aged 74 years.

**ELIZABETH, MARY, and ELEANOR**,  
Daughters of John Meredith, Taunton, mercer.

Also **ANNE**,  
Daughter of the above John Meredith, who departed this life Sept. 6th, 1675.

Also **JOHANNA**,  
Daughter of the above John Meredith, who departed this life July 3d, anno Domini 1677.

Also the above-said **JOHN MEREDITH**,  
Who departed 11th October, in the year of our Lord God 1677.

Also **AGNES**,  
Widow of the above John Meredith, who departed this life Dec. 3d, 1701, aged 79 years.

**ISABELLA BERESFORD**,  
Uxor Thomæ Beresford, de Bishop's-Hull, generosi, quæ obiit primo die Octobris, anno Domini 1719, ætatis suæ 45.

**HUGH GUNSTON**,  
The son of Hugh Gunston the younger of this town, who departed this life Sept. 7th, 1668.

*Infra quiescit corpus GULIELMI GILL de Tonoduno, mercatore, qui summâ cum laude ultimo munere prætorio in prima societate municipali hujus oppidi perfunctus est, et mortem obiit decimo septimo die Aprilis, anno Domini 1683, annoq; ætatis suæ sexagesimo nono.*

*Infra actiam jacet corpus JOHANNIS GILL de hoc oppido, generosi, filii præfati Gulielmi Gill, qui mortem obiit undevicesimo die Februarii, anno Domini 1688, annoque ætatis 42.*

*That is,—Underneath resteth the body of William Gill, of Taunton, merchant, who was the last mayor of this borough under the first charter, and discharged the office with the greatest applause. He died the 17th day of April, 1683, in the 69th year of his age.*

*Also underneath lieth the body of John Gill of this town, gentleman, son of the above-said William Gill, who died the 19th day of February, 1688, in the 42d year of his age.*

MARY HILL,

Wife of William Hill, Gent. who was mayor of this town, departed this life Sept. 5th, 1674.

JOHN COLLARD,

Of Taunton, clothier, who died 18th Jan. anno Domini, 1609.

MARY,

The wife of Robert Glessell of this parish, who departed this life November 10th, 1677, aged 24 years.

*This virtuous wife's body here doth take its rest,  
Her soule with God, angels, saints for ever blest.  
She liv'd on earth in gracious reputation,  
And waits in hope of the glorious resurrection.*

THOMAS BAKER,

Of this parish, merchant, who departed this life 18th Oct. 1708, aged 65 years.

Also JOHN BAKER,

Son of the above, who departed this life 18th October, 1708, aged 46 years.

Also MARY,

Wife of the above Mr. Thomas Baker, merchant, who departed this life November 3d, 1728, aged 79 years.

ELIZABETH REYNOLDS,

The wife of Mr. Samuel Reynolds of Taunton, who died June 9th, 1662.

SUSANNA,

Daughter of Samuel Reynolds, died 9th Feb. 1689, aged 14.

Also the above-said SAMUEL REYNOLDS,  
Of this town, serge-maker, who departed this life 25th August, 1690, aged 53 years.

## ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.

This was the conventual church of the late priory. It is every way inferior to that of St. Mary Magdalen's, but is nevertheless a strong, plain, ancient building, with a peal of five bells. It is well and uniformly pewed. Near the top of the west side of the tower, from whence also there is a fine prospect of the river and the surrounding country, are two niches, each having an effigy, which have been called Adam and Eve ; though some suppose that they represent St. John and St. James ; or more probably St. Peter and St. Paul, to whom the priory, founded long before this church was built, was dedicated. It is conceived that it was erected some time in the thirteenth century.

' This church is an oblong building, consisting of a nave and chancel, with a tower at the west end. The nave is divided into three ailes, by two rows of clustered pillars, supporting five bluntly-pointed arches. On the south side over the arcade, there is a row of small square-topped windows. It is well lighted, the windows being divided by mullions, into three lights each, and the upper part formed of hexagonal tracery. The pulpit and reading-desk are placed against the north-east pillar of the middle aisle. The font is ancient, of an octagonal form, and on each of its sides are sculptured three female figures, standing in canopied niches. Above them is a border of quatrefoils.

' A fine-toned organ was put up in this church in 1812, made by Broadwood of London. The parishioners were indebted for this appropriate ornament to the generous liberality of Frederick Corfield, esq.

of this town. This gentleman also settled upon trustees the sum of eight hundred pounds, the interest of which is to be applied to the support of a sermon in this church on Sunday afternoons, there being previously to this donation, divine service only in the mornings and evenings of alternate Sundays. Mr. Corfield was also at considerable expense in repairing the communion table, and other parts of the church.

‘ The organ was opened on Sunday the 12th of July, 1812.

‘ The living of Taunton-Saint-James is in the patronage of Sir Thomas Buckler Lethbridge, bart. of Sandhill Park, in this county.

‘ INCUMBENT CURATES OF TAUNTON-ST.-JAMES.

John Godwyn, 1640. Robert Turlyn, 1646.

John Glanville, 1654.

He was ejected from this living by the act of uniformity, in 1662. Mr. Glanville was a worthy and pious divine; he continued to preach at his own house in St. James’s parish, to his death, which happened about 1693. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Warren of this town.

Still Strobe, 1675. He was buried June 14, 1692.

James Hayes, 1699. Patrick Macdonald, 1710.

George Atwood, 1714, afterwards archdeacon of Taunton.

James Hurly, B. A. 1752.

James Hurly, jun. 1784.

He also succeeded his father in the perpetual curacy of Trull, and died in 1788.

Lawrence Heard Luxton, A. M. 1788.

He was also vicar of Ash-Priors, and prebendary of Wells. He died in 1821.

John Townsend, 1821.

## Monumental Inscriptions IN ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.

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In the vault beneath rests the body of  
**WILLIAM WALTER YEA**, Esquire,  
Eldest son and heir of Sir William Yea, Baronet,  
Of Pyrland House, in this parish.

This monument is erected

By his most affectionate wife,  
**Jane**, daughter and co-heiress of Francis Newman, esq. of Cadbury  
House, in this county,

As a tribute of true love and respect  
To the memory of the best of husbands and the best of fathers.  
He died 27th of December, 1804, aged 48.

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**JANE BLAKE**,  
Daughter of William and Jane Blake of this town, who died  
January 15th, 1757, aged 42 years.

**MALACHI BISCOE BLAKE**,  
Son of Malachi and Sarah Blake, died March 9th, 1759, aged  
3 years and 2 months.

**JANE BLAKE**,  
Died January 11th, 1769, aged 80 years.

**WILLIAM BLAKE**  
Died January 31st, 1772, aged 84 years.

**SARAH BLAKE**,  
Wife of Malachi Blake, died June 4th, 1780, aged 65.

**ABIGAIL BLAKE**,  
Who died October 23d, 1792, aged 77.

**MALACHI BLAKE**, esq.  
Died 13th April, 1795, *Ætat.* 71.

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**MARIA WYNDHAM**,  
The daughter of Sir Charles Wyndham and Dame James his wife,  
who departed this life the 19th of January, 1719. Her father  
was the son of Sir Edmund Wyndham, knight, marshal of  
England; her mother was the daughter of Major-general Young,  
and grand-daughter of the Lord Shandus.

Awake my soul, awake and sing  
Eternal praise to Heaven's king.

This monument was erected by two of her sisters, Francis White  
and Beata Hall.



In Memory of

**WILLIAM CORFIELD,**

Who died in September, 1814, aged 85.

And **CHRISTIAN,**

His wife, who died November 1792, aged 56.

Also of their issue,

**WILLIAM CORFIELD,**

Captain of the 47th Regiment, who died October, 1802, aged 42.

**WINSMORE CORFIELD,**

Of the Royal Navy, killed in America, June, 1776, aged 15.

**CHRISTIAN,**

The wife of Major-General Shawe, who died in Italy, January 1803, aged 39.

**THOMAS CORFIELD,**

Who died in China, in 1787, aged 19.

**LOUIZA BEATRICE CORFIELD,**

Who died July 1786, aged 12.

**HENRY CORFIELD,**

Captain of the 76th Regt. killed in India, January, 1805, aged 29.

Sacred to the Memory of

**ELIZABETH CORFIELD,**

Whose character was distinguished

By sincerity of heart, and gentleness of manners

To an exalted and well cultivated mind,

She united piety, charity, and benevolence

While an amiable and cheerful temper

With which she was eminently endued,

Made her the best of wives,

And secured the affections of all who knew her.

She died deeply deplored by him,

Who pays this tribute of love to her virtues,

The 7th of December, 1811, aged 49.

Also to the Memory of

**GRACE,**

The second Wife of Frederick Corfield,

Whose goodness of heart and rectitude of conduct

Manifested in her religious and moral duties,

Made her truly beloved, esteemed, and lamented.

She died the 28th March, 1816,

Aged 59.

**ROBERT HOOPER,**

Late of Taunton-St. James, yeoman, who died the 28th day of May,

In the year of our Lord 1651.

**JOANE HOOPER,**

Daughter of the above-said Robert Hooper, who dyed the 9th day

of September, 1663.

**JOHN TRIPP,**

Late of this parish, barrister at law, born March 8th, 1719.  
Buried August 15th, 1766.

**JOHN MINIFIE,**

Of this parish, and mayor of this corporation. He departed this life the 28th day of August, anno Domini 1709, and in the 47th year of his age.

**ARTHUR MINIFIE,**

A member of the corporation and son of the above-said John Minifie, he died the 27th of October, 1710, in the 22d year of his age.

**JOHN FORD,**

Of this parish, merchant, who departed this life the 23d of Jan. 1736, aged 65 years. He was son of Giles Ford of Milverton.

**MARY,**

The wife of the above John Ford, and daughter of Christopher and Ann Trott of this parish, who departed this life the 14th day of December, 1752, aged 82.

**MARY SHUTE,**

Grand-daughter of the above John and Mary Ford, died 22d June, 1765, aged 28 years.

Also **HANNAH FORD,**

Daughter of the above John and Mary Ford, who departed this life January 25th, 1784, aged 76.

**ELIZABETH,**

The wife of John Rossiter of West-Monkton, who died the 31st of December, 1692.

Also the above-said **JOHN ROSSITER,**

Who was mayor of this corporation. He died the 8th of May, Anno Domini 1708.

**JOHN SHUTE** died July 6th, 1760.

**SARAH SHUTE,**

Wife of the above, died June 2d, 1764.

**JOHN SOUTHEY, Esq.**

Who died June 20th, 1806, aged 63 years.

**ROSE REED,**

The daughter of William Reed, of this parish, who dyed the 15th day of May, Anno Domini, 1696.

Here is a rose that was ripened soon,  
Was ripe in morning and was cropt at noon.

**SAMUEL REED and ANNA REED.**

Here's two buds lying in one grave,  
And ere 'tis long a resurrection they will have.

**Mrs. JANE FARTHING,**

Who died the death of the righteous, December 17th, 1808, aged 62.

**SAMUEL APLIN, Gent.**

of this town, who departed this life the 6th day of December, 1753,  
Aged 31.

Also **HANNAH, ELIZABETH, and THOMAS APLIN,**  
Three of his children.

Also **HANNAH APLIN,**  
mother of the above Samuel Aplin, who departed this life the 12th  
day of June, 1767, aged 73.

**THOMAS COWAN, Gent.**

Who departed this life January the 9th, 1806, aged 65.

Also **ISABELLA COWAN,**  
Wife of Thomas Cowan, who departed this life Feb. 15th, 1806.

**FARDINANDO,**

Son of Fardinando Parry, who departed the 5th of April, 1700.

Also **IZAT,**

The wife of the above-said Fardinando Parry, who departed this  
life, the 17th of August, 1705.

**WILLIAM DAVIES,**

Who departed this life March the 25th, 1795, aged 60 years.

Also **MARY DAVIES,**

The wife of the above-said William Davies, who died  
August 30th, 1813, aged 69 years.

**THOMAS PARISH,**

Son of Francis Parish, White Baker, and Lydia his wife, who  
died January the 9th, anno Domini 1723, aged 14 months.

Behold and see how I doth lie,

As you be now so once was I ;

As I am now so must you be,

Prepare for death and follow me.

**FRANCIS PARISH,**

Who died August 1st, 1755, aged 65 years.

Also his Wife **LYDIA,**

Who died January the 1st, 1762, aged 72 years.

And also their sons and grandsons.

**STILL STRODE,**

Who was minister of this parish 19 years, who departed this life  
the 4th day of June, anno Domini 1692, aged 46 years.

**PETER STONE,**

Who deceased the 23d day of November.

**MARY GULLY,**

The daughter of Henry Gully, who departed this life the 1st day  
of September, 1727, aged 10 months.

Also **HENRY GULLY,**

Father of the above child, who departed this life the 27th day of  
September, 1734, aged 33 years.

EDWARD BARBER, Sen.

Died February 18th, 1735, *Ætat.* 28.

MARY TAYLOR,

Wife of the above-said Edward Barber, sen. and afterwards of Thomas Taylor, Serge-maker, died the 23d day of April, 1743, aged 73 years.

FRANCIS GARDNER,

Of this parish, Fuller, and son of Francis and Ann Gardner, who departed this life the 5th day of December, *anno Domini* 1716, and was buried the 11th day, aged — years.

MAGDALEN GULLY,

Daughter of Tristram and Ann Gardner, died the 1st May, 1746, aged 78.

With a pious resignation to the will of God, underneath this stone is buried the body of

Mrs. MARY LEWIS,

Widow of Offley Lewis, Esq. of the county of Suffolk, she departed this life in the strongest hopes of a blessed resurrection the 22d day of July, 1786, and in the 56th year of her age.

*Vivit post funera virtus.*

Also GEORGE SIKES, Esq.

Many years a Collector of Excise in this town, exemplary in his office, religious in his conduct. He exchanged this world for immortality, the 25th day of September, 1774, and in the 86th year of his age.

Also Mrs. ELIZABETH SIKES,

Widow of the above George Sikes, Esq. who departed this life September 28th, 1795, in the 95th year of her age.

CAROLINE,

Daughter of Redmond and Charlotte Barry, who died on the 16th day of June, in the 8th year of her age, *anno Domini* 1818.

Mrs. JANE St. LO,

Died 8th July, 1802, aged 78.

JOHN SLAPE the elder, Gent.

Who departed this life the 15th day of December, 1627, *anno ætatis sue* 78.

Also MARY,

The wife of the said John, who deceased the 14th day of December, *anno Domini* 1641.

Also JOHN SLAPE,

The son of Richard Slape, of this parish, gent. who was buried the 7th day of December, *anno Domini* 1671.

Also JEANE SLAPE,

Relict and widow of the aforesaid John, who departed this life the 14th day of October, 1700.

**SARAH,**

The daughter of Captain Brudenell Wansborough and Betty his wife, died May 24th, 1732, aged 3 years and 3 months

**CAPTAIN BRUDENELL WANSBOROUGH,**

Who departed this life the 26th day of June, 1741, aged 43 years.

**Also MARY MAULDA,**

The daughter of the above-said Captain Brudenell and Betty Wansborough, who departed this life the 10th day of Dec.

1744, aged 6 years and 6 months.

**Also WILLIAM,**

The son of the above-said Capt. Brudenell and Betty Wansborough, who departed this life the 4th day of February, 1746, aged 12 years and 3 months.

**BETTY,**

The wife of Captain Brudenell Wansborough, who departed this life the 12th day of January, 1783, aged 86 years.

**Also BRUDENELL,**

The son of the above-said Captain Brudenell Wansborough, and Betty his wife, who departed this life the 23d day of May, 1785.

Subtus jacet **JOHANNES HALL, M. D.**

Obiit 26th Maij, 1719, Ætat. 66.

**Necnon ELIANORA,**

Uxor prædicti Johannes Hall, quæ obiit 3<sup>o</sup> die Octobris, A. D. 1723, Ætat. 68.

**Also MATTHEW,**

Son of Matthew and Elizabeth Franklin, and great-grand-son of the above John and Eleanor Hall, who died May 27th, 1762, aged 1 year and 8 months.

## PAUL'S MEETING.

Of the dissenting meeting-houses or chapels in this town, the oldest and largest is that, called from the street in which it stands, Paul's Meeting. Its front is extensive, reaching from north to south about sixty-two feet, and having a western aspect. Before it is an area about twelve feet in width, separated from the street by iron palisades. It is a quadrangular building, the entrances being by three sets of folding doors. It is very neatly pewed, and has spacious galleries on the north, south, and west sides. The pulpit is on the east side. The vestry-room is built at the north-east corner, in addition to the chapel, and is also used as a school-room for the Sunday scholars.

The present chapel was erected in the year 1797, on the site of a former one, grown ruinous from age,<sup>1</sup> at the joint expense of the principal members of the congregation, amounting in the whole to upwards of two thousand pounds. During the time occupied in rebuilding, divine service was performed in the mornings in the assize-hall, and in the evenings, at the baptist chapel in Mary-Street. The new chapel was opened on Sunday, July 8th, 1797, by the Rev. Isaac Tozer, the resident minister.

<sup>1</sup> The old structure bore some resemblance in its form to a roman capital T. The horizontal line constituted the body of the building, and was, including the walls, fifty-one feet in breadth. From nearly the middle of it a wing projected almost behind the pulpit, thirty-six feet long, and twenty-one feet wide, answering to the perpendicular line of the T. Before it was an area of one hundred and twenty-two feet in width, planted with a row of lime trees.

The dissenters, who must, as it would appear from the size of the old chapel, have been very numerous at the time of its erection, availed themselves of the respite they enjoyed from an harassed and persecuted state, by the indulgence of Charles II. to raise this place of worship in 1672.

The conveyance of the plot of ground, on which the chapel stands, is dated May 10th, 1672, 24 Charles II. and on a piece of wood on the old building, towards the street, the figures 1672 were carved; which circumstances point out the commencement of the society. Amidst the confusion and outrages which were the consequences of the duke of Monmouth's feeble and vain efforts, the congregation was broken up, and the seats, stairs, and galleries being torn up, were made into a bonfire. Sometime between 1685 and 1687, a proposal was made to turn the building into a workhouse, and a vestry was called for that purpose. A friend of the dissenters recommended it to the vestry to consider of their design; when it was observed that no person laid any claim to it, and that in its present state it was of no use, he replied, "A claim may be laid to it upon a proper occasion." This stopt the proceedings.

This proper occasion seemed to offer in a few years. Upon king James's dispensation, the dissenters resumed spirit, and put their chapel in order again; and Mr. Warren and Mr. Hartford were chosen co-pastors. Soon after a person of some note dying, Mr. Hartford proposed that the deceased should be interred in it, as that might effectually prevent the buildings being turned to another use. For he con-

ceived that more reverence would be paid to it as a repository of the dead, than from its being looked upon as a conventicle for schismatics. Many have been since interred in it, and behind the building there is a spacious burial ground.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1732, a place of worship belonging to a class of protestant dissenters, who seceded from Paul's meeting, was erected in Tancred-Street, called the New Meeting. This was a neat, plain, and uniform building about 33 feet in front and nearly 50 feet in depth. Before it was an area, planted with a row of lime trees, 28 feet deep. This structure owed its origin to an attempt made by the friends of the late Dr. Amory, to fix him as an assistant to Mr. Batson, their aged minister, which was opposed by him and the majority of the people. The freedom with which Mr. Amory avowed his sentiments, that greatly deviated from the orthodox standard, was on the side of Mr. Batson's friends, a ground of prejudice against him, and with others, who were disposed to think liberally, a cause of attachment. But in this instance, as is frequently the case, other considerations, if they did not kindle religious zeal, blended their influence with it. Mr. Batson was not willing to relinquish any part of the salary. The separation, though it arose, at least in part, from a trait of character we must censure, and as it forms a part of a minister's character, particularly lament, gave occasion for opening the New Meeting, as a place of worship, where devotions solely addressed to the *One God and Father of all*, whom the congregation considered the proper object of worship, met with the support of, though not a large, yet an harmonious and respectable society.

In the year 1815, this congregation formed an union with that of the baptists in Mary-street, and the chapel in Tancred-street being in a ruinous state, was taken down, and the materials sold. The site of the building was converted into a burial-ground attached to the baptists' chapel.

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## ' MINISTERS OF PAUL'S MEETING.'

**George Newton.**

He was ejected from St. Mary Magdalen's, Taunton, and became the first pastor of this congregation, between the years 1672, and 1677 ; with him was connected as co-pastor,

**George Hammond, M. A.**

He was born 1620, and studied partly at Exeter college, Oxford, and partly at Trinity college, Dublin, where he was once met by archbishop Usher, who entered into a familiar conversation with him, and was so taken with him, that long after coming again to the college, he enquired after him, and expressed his opinion that Mr. Hammond would become a considerable man. At Oxford his mind first imbibed a serious and deep sense of religion. He was sometime minister of Totness, where, after he had been preaching with great seriousness about patience and resignation to the will of God, a young child of his was killed by falling out of the window of an upper chamber. By the act of uniformity he was ejected from the living of Trinity and St. Peter, in Dorchester, estimated at one hundred and sixty pounds per annum. The persecutions which preceded, and the barbarities which followed, the duke of Monmouth's attempt, drove him to London, where he joined with, and then succeeded, Mr. Richard Steel, as pastor of a congregation. He died 1705. He was an excellent scholar, a good critic, and very conversant in the scriptures ; of a clear head and faithful memory, of eminent humility and meekness, of a very even temper and a most peaceable healing spirit. His sermons were plain, solid, and judicious ; but for want of a lively delivery were not valued by common hearers, according to their merit. The ladies Courtney and Constantine, sensible of his abilities and qualifications, committed their sons to his care. When the nation was alarmed with the fears of popery, he was particularly active and zealous in preparing his people against the attempts of seducers, and the day of trial. For this purpose he lectured on the tenets of popery, every Monday night, at their own houses, to the admiration and great satisfaction of those who frequented this exercise. He published a sermon on the Morning exercises ; a discourse of family

<sup>1</sup> From Dr. Toulmin's MSS.

worship, drawn up at the request of the London ministers ; a preface to Mr. Richard Saunder's Discourse on angels ; and a funeral sermon for Mr. Richard Steel, entitled, " The Good Minister of Jesus Christ," of which Mr. Bulkley, in his " Christian Minister," speaks in high terms.<sup>1</sup>

**Matthew Warren and Emanuel Hartford,**

Were chosen joint pastors, about the year 1687, on king James's indulgence.

Mr. Warren, the younger son of Mr. John Warren, a gentleman of a good estate, who lived at Otterford, in Devon, was born in 1642. He received his classical learning at Crewkerne, and pursued academical studies four years at Oxford : from whence he removed, with his tutor to Reading, where he spent a year and then returned to his relations, and entered on ministerial service : from which he was laid aside by the act of uniformity, being ejected from Downhead, in Somersetshire. On this event, at the importunity of a friend, he opened a seminary at Taunton for the education of youth for the sacred ministry : over which he presided for many years, with great reputation and usefulness. Though educated himself in the logic and philosophy of the schools, and little acquainted with the modern improvements of the new, he encouraged a freedom of enquiry and of reading in his pupils, and invited them to a critical study of the scriptures. His good humour and pleasant temper, and a happy art of adapting himself to the various temper and genius of youth, rooted him in their affections. He possessed a great share of learning, while humility and modesty were distinguishing parts of his character. He met with many difficulties in the reigns of king Charles and king James, which he cheerfully supported. His person was often sought, and singularly preserved. Once his wife had a strong impression on her mind, that if he did not return from the house, to which he had retreated for safety, till such a time, he would certainly be taken prisoner. Accordingly she sent a messenger, with a letter, earnestly requesting his return, or else he might never see her more. Mr. Warren, ascribing this importunity to her indisposition, immediately took leave of his friends and set off. But he had not gone far from the house, before looking back from

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<sup>1</sup> Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial, vol. i. p. 450, 451.

an ascent, he saw it surrounded by persons, sent to apprehend him. He died June 14, 1706, in the 64th year of his age. His life was peace and love : his motto, " Let your moderation be known unto all men." In his last hours, he discovered, under extreme pain, true patience and submission. On being asked how he was, he answered, " I am just going into eternity ; but I bless God, I am neither ashamed to live, nor afraid to die."<sup>1</sup>

### Emanuel Hartford.

He was ejected from Upton-Noble, in Somersetshire. He was descended from a creditable family, but the circumstances of his parents were not equal to the expenses of a liberal education, so that he acquired learning under great difficulties, and by hard study. He went early to the university, and was maintained there by a gentleman, who was a stranger to him, and by an uncle, a minister of great reputation for learning and piety. When he left the university he supported himself for some time, by teaching a school : and, at the solicitation of many eminent persons, entered on the ministry at about twenty-one years of age. He afterwards reflected on appearing, at so early a period, in a public character, with regret and shame. During his troubles for non-conformity, which were considerable, he resumed the study of that controversy with a full determination to conform, if he could tolerably satisfy himself on the question ; for he would not expose himself to hardships for slight reasons : but after his maturest studies, he found himself more dissatisfied than before, and was forced to take his lot among the non-conformists, and share contempt and poverty with them : " who," as he expressed it, " were cast out, not for idleness—not for heresy—not for insufficiency—not for scandal—not for rebellion ; but because, in conscience they could not comply with some things, which their adversaries themselves acknowledged to be of an indifferent nature." His circumstances were never great, and his subsistence was at all times so scanty, that he knew not from what sources to provide the necessaries of the next day : when, by the hands of a mere stranger, or some unexpected friend, seasonable supplies, as his extremities returned, have been afforded

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<sup>1</sup> Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial, vol. ii. p. 358, 359. Amory's Life of Grove, in Grove's Works, vol. i. preface, p. 14 and Sprint's Funeral Sermon for Warren.

him. He was always contented, easy, and cheerful; and when his income became settled, he laid by but very little, and expended the overplus, above what subsisted his small family, in charitable contributions; many times he straitened himself to help others, and was kind to the unkind and thankless. The little substance he left behind him, he bequeathed to the purposes of charity and piety. His private conversation was serious and edifying: he was an indefatigable student: his discourses were elaborate and judicious, admirably adapted to the different state of his people; comprising in a few words, a great deal of matter, clothed in a grave and majestic style, and ranged in an easy and natural method. And his labours were eminently successful.<sup>a</sup> There was published after his death, in 1725, a small volume of sermons, entitled, "Practical Discourses on several Subjects;" which were printed from copies, taken in short hand, as they were preached. He died within two months of his colleague, August 4th, 1706, aged 66.

### Edmund Batson.

He was a student under Mr. Warren, and began to preach in 1693. His first settlement was at Ilminster; from whence he removed to Clapham, in 1697; where he continued till 1706; on the 11th of September, of which year, he received an invitation to succeed the late two worthy pastors of Paul's meeting, which he accepted, and settled with the congregation in the December following. For some years he had a colleague in the pastoral office, the Rev. Thomas Cornish, who dying in 1714, Mr. Batson continued sole pastor till the year 1730, or 1732; when his advanced years required the aid of a colleague, to lighten the service of a numerous society, which then consisted of 1,500 hearers, and the place of worship was so crowded, that unless persons went early, it was with difficulty they could get to their pews. Mr. Batson was entirely laid aside by the infirmities of age for two years before his death, which happened in 1735.

### Samuel Stodden, and ——— Drewitt.

The first gentleman succeeded Mr. Batson, having been connected with him, as co-pastor, from the year 1732. Mr. Drewitt, who was minister to a congregation of dissenters, at Bridport, in Dorset.

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<sup>a</sup> Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial, vol. ii. p. 383, 384, and Sprint's Funeral Sermon for Mr. Hartford.

shire, was invited, in 1737, to be a co-pastor with Mr. Stodden : he accepted the invitation, but continued in that relation about a year only ; for falling into a consumption, he removed to Beaminster, in Dorsetshire, for change of air, and there died. He was succeeded, in the capacity of assistant only, first by Mr. Steffe, and then by Mr. Benjamin Fawcett.\* In the year 1746, Mr.

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\* Mr. Thomas Steffe was the son of the Rev. John Steffe, a worthy clergyman of the established church, remarkable for his piety, learning, and moderation, once of Emmanuel College, in Cambridge, and afterwards rector of Wrentham, in Suffolk, where he died, August 7th, 1737. The subject of this note was born April 6th, 1716. He had a very weak constitution from his infancy, but discovered an early solidity of genius, seriousness of temper, and fondness for books. He formed an acquaintance with the learned languages under his father, an accurate judge in the elegancies of the latin. When he was deemed qualified for academical studies, he resolutely declined, from principles of conscience, the offers made by a person of the first rank, of being provided for at the university. His case having been accidentally mentioned to the Rev. John Barker, an eminent dissenting minister at London, he, and another gentleman, unknown, determined to assist this promising youth with an exhibition of twenty pounds per annum, to relieve his father, advanced in years, and burdened with a numerous family. In the year 1733, at the request of his friends, he was placed under the care of the great and good Dr. Doddridge, at Northampton. He preached his first sermon from 2 Sam. vii. 18. on the first of January, 1738 : and before the end of that month, his excellent tutor recommended him as a candidate for the post of an assistant to Mr. Stodden. His labours were universally acceptable to the people, who gave him an unanimous and pressing invitation to settle with them, which he accepted, and came to Taunton in the following summer. All the sermons, except the last, which he composed during the two years he continued in this situation, it appeared from the fairness with which they were written, and the care with which they were finished, were written out twice ; they were all serious, spiritual, and candid, upon important and practical subjects ; and such as became a preacher, who considered that his sermons were written in the book of God's remembrance,

Stodden resigned his pastoral charge, and removed to his estate at Budleigh, in Devon, where he resided till his death. His successor was

and that he must shortly render an account to him, in whose name and presence he had the honour to speak. In May, 1740, he was seized with the small-pox, and died the 4th of June, having lately entered into the 25th year of his age; valued by persons of all denominations, and universally lamented. In the year 1742, there appeared from the press a posthumous volume in 12mo, of his sermons on several subjects, published at the desire of several of his friends, by Dr. Doddridge; with an account of his life and character, and some extracts from his letters.<sup>1</sup> His sermons shew his correctness, judgment, and genius; and they, with his letters, testify to his excellent spirit and ardent piety.

Mr. Benjamin Fawcett, who succeeded Mr. Steffe, was born at Sleaford, in Lincolnshire, 1715, was also educated under Dr. Doddridge, and came to Taunton in 1741; where he was ordained and married. In 1745, he removed to Kidderminster, in Worcestershire; where he continued thirty-five years, sole pastor of a large and flourishing congregation; and died Oct. 18th, 1780, aged 65. He conducted the public services of his ministry with uncommon zeal and ardour. His private conversation discovered a deep and lively sense of piety, and an habitual desire of impressing the minds of his acquaintance with the same. He was peculiarly punctual and regular in the transactions of civil life, and most diligent in the improvement of his time, and with this view, was a constant early riser. His labours and studies were animated by a spirit of zeal, but that zeal was not contaminated by bigotry; for he had a full conviction, that the difficulties attending controversial subjects lay a just foundation for candour:<sup>2</sup> of this he gave an instructive and amiable proof in a judicious tract published by him, not long before his death, entitled, "Candid Reflections on the different Manner in which the learned and pious have expressed themselves concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity; in a Letter to a Friend." This was soon followed by an appendix, addressed to the "Reverend Ministers and Gentlemen, Managers of the Independent Fund in

<sup>1</sup> See his life prefixed to his sermons.

<sup>2</sup> From the communications of his son, the Rev. Samuel Fawcett, of Beaminster, and of the Rev. Richard Darracott of Taunton.

### Richard Pearsall.

He was born at Kidderminster, in Worcestershire, August 29, 1698; and received his academical education under the learned Mr. Samuel Jones, at Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire; spent the first ten years of his ministry at Bromyard, in Herefordshire; removed from thence to Warminster, in Wiltshire, where he continued his ministry sixteen years; and, towards the end of the year 1746, settled at Taunton; where, after having discharged the duties of his character, with great acceptance, for above fifteen years, he died much respected and beloved by his people, November 10, 1762.<sup>1</sup> He had a great knowledge of mankind, and knew how to manage the affairs of civil life with a skill and address suitable to the concerns in which he was engaged, and the characters with whom he had to transact them. His assistance was often, therefore, sought in the public political business of the town; especially where there was occasion for an able and insinuating epistolary correspondence. His deportment was friendly and affable. The spirit of zeal and piety glowed in his public ministration; and his compositions are described by the editor of his posthumous pieces, as "consecrated with a rich vein of deep and evangelical devotion, and more or less brightened with the traces of a lively and pleasing imagination." He published a funeral sermon on Job, xiv. 2. 1740; another, for Mrs. Tristram, on Psalm xvii. 15, 1758; in the same year, a third, on 2d Chron. xxxiv. 3. for Master Henry Peacock, who died Nov. 27,

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London; occasioned by an Anonymous Letter to the Author." His other publications, all expressive of the earnestness with which he directed his exertions to the advancement of practical religion, were, besides several single sermons, "A Compassionate Address to the Christian Negroes in Virginia and other British Colonies in North America."—"The Grand Enquiry; Am I in Christ or not?" "The Sacred Almoner."—"The Religious Weaver; or Pious Meditations on the Trade of Weaving."—"Extracts from the Diary, Meditations, and Letters of Mr. Joseph Williams."—"Observations on the nature, causes, and cure of Melancholy; especially of that which is called Religious Melancholy."—And abridgments of several of the practical pieces of the great Mr. Baxter, particularly his "Saints Everlasting Rest."

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gibbon's Preface to his *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, p. 2.

1757, aged 15; and a sermon at the ordination of the Rev. James Kirkup, Nov. 11, 1747, on Rom. x. 15. "Contemplations on the ocean, harvest, sickness, last judgment; on butterflies, on the full-moon, and in a walk through a wood; in a series of letters to several friends," 2 vols. 12mo. He was also the editor of a piece, entitled, "The power and pleasure of the divine life, exemplified in the late Mrs. Houseman, of Kidderminster, as extracted from her own papers." After his death were published from his manuscripts, designed for the press, by Dr. Thomas Gibbons, "Reliquiæ Sacræ; or meditations on select passages of scripture: and sacred dialogues between a father and his children," 2 vols. 12mo. To which is prefixed a letter addressed to the church under his pastoral care, which he left to be read to them after his decease; strongly expressive of his affection for them, and of his lively and earnest concern for their prosperity. The next pastor to this congregation was

### William Johnson.

He was born in 1710, near Skeyton, in Norfolk, and received his classical learning under the Rev. Joseph Nichol Scott, sometime a dissenting minister at Norwich, and afterwards a physician. He pursued his academical studies under the direction of the very learned Mr. John Eames, F. R. S. and the Rev. Dr. Abraham Taylor, a minister of eminence of the independent denomination, at Deptford, near London. His first settlement was at Ryegate, in Surrey, where he was ordained October 6, 1736. He removed from that place to Romsey, in Hants, where he spent near five and twenty years, and opened a school for classical learning, which he carried on, with reputation and usefulness, to his death. A graceful person and melodious voice set off his pulpit services; which were generally acceptable and pleasing. He died December 4, 1768, aged 58, expressing a perfect resignation to the will of God, and desiring, whether living or dying to be the Lord's; saying, "I desire to live no longer than I can live to the glory of God:" and speaking with great joy and satisfaction on the blessedness of the heavenly state. Amongst his last words were these: "There is nothing belonging to this world worth living for:" and "The consolations of God are neither few nor small." Mr. Johnson



published only a charge at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Pearson, at Lymington.<sup>1</sup>

**Abdiel Edwards,**

On the decease of Mr. Johnson, was invited to accept of the pastoral office. He was the son of the Rev. Mr. Edwards, the minister of the independent society, at Bradford, in Wilts. He commenced his academical studies under the Rev. John Lavington, and on his decease, 1764, finished them, at Bridport, under the Rev. James Rooker. He first settled at Glastonbury. His connection with Paul's Meeting subsisted about two years; when he resigned it, and returning to Glastonbury, in a few months after died of a consumption.

**Thomas Reader**

Succeeded at midsummer 1771. He published, besides several single sermons, a letter to Dr. Priestley on his appeal, and another to sir Harry Trelawny, on his sermon; preached at Taunton, May 26, 1779. "Remarks on the prophetic part of the Revelation of St. John." 8vo. "Remarks on the three first chapters of the Revelation of St. John." And "Israel's Salvation: or, an Account from the prophecies of Scripture of the grand Events which await the Jews, to the end of time." Mr. Reader died in 1794, having been assisted in his ministerial labours, for a short time previously to his death, by the Rev. Samuel Rooker, who continued to preach to the congregation until the appointment of the next pastor,

**Isaac Tozer,**

Who was assisted during the last ten years of his ministry by his son, the Rev. Robert Tozer. Mr. Tozer died in 1820, and was succeeded by the present pastor,

**Thomas Luke.**

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<sup>1</sup> From private information, the services at Mr. Johnson's ordination, and his funeral sermon, by the Rev. John Peacock.—Mr. Scott, mentioned above, the son of the Rev. Thomas Scott, many years a respectable dissenting minister at Norwich, was, it is said, richly furnished with Greek literature. He published in 2 vols. 8vo. 1743, a series of very ingenious and sensible discourses, preached at the French church lecture in Norwich, entitled, "Sermons preached in defence of all religions, whether natural or revealed."

## Monumental Inscriptions IN PAUL'S MEETING.

H. S. E.

HENRICUS GROVIUS,

Optimorum parentum proles optima ;

Patrem enim ex antiqua Groviorum familia Wiltonensi,  
Matrem ex Boviorum in agro Devonienſi haud minus vetuſta,  
Ortos, pietate et beneficentia inſignes, habuit.

Utrisque virtutum filius hæres

Bonarum literarum ſtudiis tam ſedulo ſe applicuit,  
Ut, anno ætatis vicesimo tertio, in frequenti theologorum cœtu,  
Ad juventutem liberalibus diſciplinis inſtituendam,

Omnium ſuffragiis eligeretur ;

Ad quod munus animus etiam ingenuus, morumque ſuavitas,  
Natura illum ſinxiffe videbatur.

Neque ſpem eventus ſefellit ;

Annos enim amplius triginta, haud minore ſua laude

Quam bono publico, in eo verſatus,

Mentes juveniles omnigena pariter virtute

Ac optimis artibus excolere ſtudioſe laboravit.

Pastoris interim officio fungens,

Pari fidelitate gregi ſuo invigilavit,

Eaque quibus ſalus humana præcipue afficitur,

Tam in concionibus quam ſcriptis, inculcans,

Nihil ad gratiam aut partium ſtudio

Dicere ſuſtinuit.

Simplex autem verique ſtudioſiſſimus,

Pietatem in Deum, in homines charitatem,

Cupiditatum moderationem, ut ſumma religionis capita,

Omnium approbationi commendavit.

Ea ingenii felicitate uſus eſt,

Ut, in quodcunque argumentum ſeſe convertit,  
Acute cogitare, ſubtiliter diſtinguere, graviter judicare,

Senſumque animi facile exponere poſſet.

Tam modeſte autem de ſe ſenſit,

Ut nemini, quod in alia eſſet ſententia, litem moveret.

Sorte ſua, licet modica, contentus fuit,

Aliorum rebus lautioribus haud invidens,

Nec cupiens.

Tot tantisque virtutibus ornatus,

Omnibus ſibi notis amatus vixit, obiit deſſetus

III. Cal. Martii, anno Domini

MDCCXXXVII.

Ætatis ſuz LV.

(IN ENGLISH.)

Here lies

**HENRY GROVE,**

An excellent son of excellent parents.

His father, who was descended from the ancient family

Of the Groves of Wiltshire,

And his mother, who came from the Boveys,

A family of equal antiquity in the county of Devon,

Were alike distinguished for piety and beneficence.

Their son, who inherited the virtues of both,

Applied himself so closely to literary studies,

That, at the age of twenty-three,

He was unanimously chosen, in a numerous assembly of divines,

To instruct youth in the liberal arts ;

An office, for which an ingenuous mind, and suavity of manners,

Appeared by nature to have formed him.

Nor were the expectations that had been entertained of him

Deceived by the event ;

For engaged in that duty above thirty years,

With no less honour to himself than benefit to the public,

He assiduously laboured to adorn the youthful mind,

Not only with every virtue,

But with the most valuable knowledge.

Discharging in the mean time the functions of a minister of the gospel,

He watched with equal fidelity over his flock,

And while he inculcated, both in his sermons and in his writings,

Those things which most materially affect

The salvation of mankind,

He shewed himself equally incapable of courting favour,

And of indulging a spirit of party.

Sincere and studious of the truth,

He recommended to the approbation of all,

As the most important points in religion,

Piety to God, charity to men, restraint of the passions.

With such a felicity of talent was he endowed,

That to whatever subject he directed his attention,

He was acute in examining, nice in discriminating,

Weighty in his judgment, and ready in the expression of his thoughts.

But so modest an opinion had he of his own abilities,

That he never quarrelled with any one

For differing from him in sentiment.

With his circumstances, though moderate, he was contented,  
Neither envying nor coveting the more affluent state of others.

Adorned with virtues so many and so eminent,

He lived beloved, and died lamented, by all who knew him,

Departing this life the 27th of February, 1737,

In the 55th year of his age.

*Arms.*—On a Chevron three Escallops.

In Memoriam  
IMMANUELIS HARFORD,  
Viri admodum reverendi, pii, docti,  
Annos-circiter XX. Ecclesiæ hujus pastoris,  
Qui, laboribus studiisque exhaustus, obiit  
Die Aug. VIII. anno Domini MDCCVI.  
Ætatis suæ LXVI.

Monumentum hoc amici posuere.  
“The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him  
in the last day.”—*John* xii. 48.

(IN ENGLISH.)

In memory of  
IMMANUEL HARFORD,  
A most reverend, pious, and learned man,  
Who was pastor of this congregation about twenty years,  
And who,  
Worn out with labour and study,  
Departed this life the 8th of August, 1706,  
In the 66th year of his age,  
His friends have erected this monument.

In Memory of  
Mr. JOSIAH PEACOCK,  
Born 19th June, 1695, died 31st May, 1775.  
Interr'd the body lies, thus speaks the stone ;  
Where it now rests must shortly rest thy own :  
Yet shall this frame re-animated rise,  
And join its kindred spirit in the skies.

BETTY,  
The wife of Samuel Reed, of this town; wool-merchant, who  
departed this life the 12th day of August, 1756, aged 44 years.

The above SAMUEL REED,  
Obiit June 26th, 1770, aged 71.

Also MARY REED,  
Wife of the above Samuel Reed, who died Nov. 26, 1807, aged 91.

Sacred to the Memory of  
THOMAS PARSONS, Esq. and MARY, his wife,  
Thomas Parsons died February 2d, 1800, aged 76.

Mary Parsons died Feb. 1st, 1788, aged 80.

“Behold, I come quickly.”—*Rev.* xxii. 7.  
Reader, prepare, death soon will strike at thee ;  
O seek for life in Christ, that you may be  
Prepared in time for vast eternity.

Sacred to the Memory of  
Mr. JOHN WESTCOTT,  
Serge-maker, who died July 5th, 1781, aged 80 years.

## BAPTISTS' CHAPEL.

This chapel is situate in Mary-street, and is a large and handsome building, erected in 1721. The dimensions, including the walls, are fifty-four feet by forty-nine. The roof is supported by two strong and curious pillars of the Corinthian order. The pulpit and the stair-case are enriched with elegantly carved work. The fronts of the galleries and pews are made of Flemish oak, which gives the whole a neat and handsome appearance. The seats are judiciously arranged, so as to make the access to them perfectly easy, and to give every hearer a view of the preacher. It is furnished with one large and handsome brass chandelier, and two small ones: and for the communion there is a complete and rich service of plate, consisting of two plates for the bread, two flagons for the wine, and four cups with feet to serve it round to the communicants, the bequest of Mr. Samuel Noble, attorney at law, in 1745; with a pair of candlesticks with snuffers and dish, the legacy of his mother, Mrs. Jane Noble, in 1777. Before this edifice there is an area nine feet wide, and behind it a commodious burial ground.

This building was raised by the generous and sole exertions of the society, nearly on the spot where the old meeting-house stood.

A society of baptists existed, in this town, so far back as the year 1646. Some peculiar sentiments and practices with respect to the institution of baptism, as the name denotes, distinguish this congregation from other protestant dissenters. They apprehend that what is called *infant baptism* has no foundation in the New Testament; because there does not occur there any precept enjoining it, nor any example of

the practice, to give it a sanction ; consequently that it is no institution of Christ. It is also their opinion that had the greek word *baptizo*, expressing the initiatory ordinance of the christian religion, been translated, it must have been rendered to *dip*, or *immerse* : they, therefore, in the administration of this ordinance, lay the whole body under water and raise it up again. In other points, this denomination of christians formerly agreed with other protestant dissenters, particularly in adopting the system of Calvin, and, the doctrine of the Trinity. Though there were, originally, in this town a body of them, who discarded the sentiments of Calvin, concerning the power of human will, and were called *Free-willers* ; who being reduced to a few men and women, were united to the other society of Baptists, in 1722. This society, since that time, has assumed a different cast ; their worship is conducted on the Unitarian plan of devotion, in which all prayers are addressed to *One God and Father of all*, in the name of Jesus Christ ; and their communion is open to christians who differ from them on the questions concerning the mode and subjects of baptism.

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#### MINISTERS OF THE BAPTIST CONGREGATION.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Burgess

Was its first pastor ; but the date of his connexion cannot exactly be ascertained. He suffered frequent imprisonments for his religious profession.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Whinnel.

He resided at Bristol, and was invited to Taunton, in August, 1688. He continued pastor of this congregation till March 1, 1720. His

<sup>1</sup> From Dr. Toulmin's MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Crosby's History of the English Baptists, vol. iii. p. 126.

funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Thomas Lucas, of Trowbridge on Psalm cxix. 165, who says of Mr. Whinnel, that "he was an example of loving the law of God, and of the pleasure and peace which result from thence. He began to be religious betimes, and betook himself to the reading and study of the scriptures, the bible being generally before him; and in this study he continued to the last; by which means he became familiarly acquainted with the revealed will of God. His religion, as he did not place it in little niceties and singularities, was far from bigotry or enthusiasm: nor did he think that it obliged him to a stiff, starch behaviour, to a demure look, or an unsociable, sullen reserve; but an agreeable mixture of cheerfulness and gravity sat in his aspect. His address was easy and smooth; an endearing freedom and facetiousness, happily blended with an air of seriousness, ran through his demeanor, which at once drew respect and reverence. He had learnt the art, which but few can attain, of conversing with familiarity, without danger of throwing himself into contempt. About the age of two and twenty he was called to the work of the ministry, and continued in it two or three and forty years; his whole soul was engaged in it, and to fulfil it he suffered persecutions, fines, and imprisonments. His gesture and mien in the pulpit were graceful, his pronunciation sweet, his explanation of the scriptures clear, and his applications apt and pathetic. He had an admirable skill in reproving offenders, so as to convince and engage at the same time. His preaching and practice were of a piece. His graces were rendered more bright and conspicuous by the admirable sweetness of his natural temper. It was difficult to throw him into a passion, but easy to reduce him to a calm. He was made up of tenderness and compassion, and seemed to have made the griefs and sorrows of others his own. He was of a generous temper, would sacrifice his own private interest to the public good; and his purse, as well as his labours, was at the service of the cause, in which he embarked. Nor were his good offices confined to those of his own sentiments in religion; he was ever ready to express his love to all that feared God, and laboured to be, without distinction, extensively useful. He was singularly serviceable to the town of Taunton, and generally beloved. As far as could be perceived, his mind was always peaceful, calm, and serene: especially did his peace abound, when he came

within view of death. "My work," said he, "is finished, and I am prepared for death. I do not desire to return, but had rather *depart and be with Christ*. I know in whom I have believed. I have no doubt, no cloud upon my mind. Death is not terrible. I know its sting is taken away; and though the passage is dark and gloomy, yet I must pass through it; which I am willing to do, since it leads to those blissful mansions, where I shall be for ever with the Lord."<sup>a</sup> Mr. Whinnel published one sermon, entitled, "The best portion; being a sermon preached at the funeral of Mrs. Mary Steed, in the city of Exon, Nov. 16, 1699." 4to. In the dedication he thus expressed himself; "I know not whether it be my unhappiness, that I cannot please myself in any thing that I do for Jesus Christ; yet I am not without hopes that God accepts my sincere, though mean, endeavours for his glory: my whole design (as far as I know my own heart) is to promote charity, truth, and peace, amongst all with whom I am concerned."

### Joseph Jeffries.

He was a native of Taunton, and was ordained co-pastor with Mr. Whinnel, Aug. 6, 1717. On the death of the latter he came to the sole care of this congregation. Mr. Jeffries left behind him a respectable and amiable character for piety, a generous and active zeal in promoting every public design for the advancement of religion, and for his condescending affability and liberality to the poor. Towards the close of his life, he was led, by further enquiry and reflection, into a conviction, that the Calvinistic sentiments he had, in an early period, espoused, and to that time preached, were not well founded in the holy scriptures; and he displayed his candour and integrity by an avowal, from the pulpit, of the change in his sentiments, and by his endeavours to lead his people into the views he then entertained. He died in April, 1746.

### Richard Harrison,\* A. M.

He preached Mr. Jeffries' funeral sermon, and was chosen to succeed him. He was a native of the city of York, and the youngest of twelve children. His father for many years was a member

\* Extracted from the funeral sermon.

\* This article is drawn up from private information and personal knowledge.



of the established church, and educated his eldest son to the ministry in it ; but afterwards joined the protestant dissenters. Mr. Harrison received his academical learning at the university of Edinburgh. The first years of his public ministry were spent, partly in the neighbourhood of London, when he was librarian to Dr. Williams's library, and preached at Newington Green ; and partly at Colchester. He was afterwards minister of a pædo-baptist congregation at Oxford. From that city, having been interrupted one Lord's day in his public services, by rudeness and bigotry,<sup>1</sup> he removed to Thame, in the same county ; where he served a small society, who knew and respected his worth. Though before he settled there, he had changed his sentiments, on the questions concerning the subjects and mode of baptism, this people liberally dispensed with those ministerial functions he could not conscientiously perform. From Thame he removed to Moreton-Hampstead, in Devonshire ; and from that place to Bridgwater, in Somersetshire ; from whence he was invited to Taunton ; where he continued eighteen years, till 1764, having generously resigned his connexion to make room for the late Dr. Toulmin, who also, about that time, saw reason to declare, on conviction, against the practice of infant baptism. Mr. Harrison continued to reside at Taunton for six years ; when he removed to Nailsworth, and then to Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire. From the last place he went to live at Liverpool, and preached for some time at a chapel in the neighbourhood of that town. His last settlement, as a minister, was at Leek, in Staffordshire. The congregations which he served, after he left Taunton, were all pædo-baptists. In every place, he left, in the minds of the people, an affectionate sense and a respectful remembrance of his worth and goodness. When he had resided some time at Leek, he was incapacitated for public services by a paralytic stroke, which, though slight, affected the organs of speech. On this he returned to York, after an absence of many years, " to lay his bones,"

<sup>1</sup> As he was preaching, a man of the congregation rose up and asked aloud, what *that* he delivered had to do with the edification of souls ? to which Mr. Harrison replied with great readiness and calm firmness, " What I have said, I have said under a sense of his presence in whose name I speak." On the information of Mr. Ward.

as he expressed it, "where he first received them." Here he spent the remainder of his days. About the beginning of Dec. 1781, he was visited with a more general paralytic seizure, which, as a respected mutual friend<sup>1</sup> writes, "gradually increased upon him for about three weeks, then took him off without a struggle, and, it is believed, without a pain. Through the whole of his illness he retained his wonted serenity and cheerfulness of mind, and died as a good man would wish to die," between seventy and eighty years of age. He was a man of great simplicity and integrity; delivering his sentiments from the pulpit with an undisguised frankness, and maintaining, in all his conduct, probity of character. A gentleman, who well knew mankind, often said, "That he had rather have Mr. Harrison's *heart*, than lord Bacon's head." He was scarcely known, amidst all the freedoms of social converse, to speak evil of any man. Such was his modesty and humility, he ever expressed a deep and grateful sense of every instance of respect and kindness shewn to him, as if beyond his merit. So far was he from envying the talents, or being jealous of the popularity of other ministers, that he took a pleasure to introduce into his pulpit those whose ministrations he thought would be more pleasing than his own. His generosity was great, and he has been known to give a garment away before he was furnished with another in its place. His sermons were judicious and instructive, though not popular. Great was his candour towards those who differed from him in religious sentiments: large and diffusive was his charity. His publications were, a letter in the *White-Hall Evening Post*, Sept. 17, 1747, to the author of the dissenting gentleman's letter to Mr. White. In 1747, "An humble and free address to the most noble president, &c. of the Foundling Hospital;" signed Verax. It discussed the question concerning infant baptism. A letter by way of reply to it was sent to be inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, but was not allowed a place.

### Joshua Toulmin, D. D.

A memoir of Dr. Toulmin, the author of the first edition of the *History of Taunton*, is given in a subsequent chapter.

### Job David.

Dr. Toulmin was succeeded in the year 1803, as the pastor of this congregation, by the Rev. Job David, who was born at

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Mr. Cappe, of York.

Newton-Nottage, in the county of Glamorgan, in 1746. His father, who was a baptist minister, and had the superintendence of a church at Pen-y-fai, in the vicinity of Bridgend, died October 23d, 1766, in his 50th year; and his name and character are highly spoken of in that part of the principality, even to the present day. The son having been sometime before baptised, and commenced preacher, was sent in 1766, to the baptist academy at Bristol, under the care of Messrs. Hugh and Caleb Evans, both then in the zenith of their reputation. Here he remained till 1771, and afterwards went back to Wales, officiating at Pen-y-fai. He was afterwards invited to Frome, in this county, to succeed Mr. Ledgfield, and was ordained Oct. 7th, 1773. Being thus settled, he, in 1774, married the eldest daughter of Mr. John Allen, a reputable tradesman of that town, by whom he had several children. His wife dying in 1794, he, in 1798, married the amiable and truly respectable widow of the late Richard Wilson, esq. At Frome, Mr. David continued for thirty years, discharging his pastoral office, with zeal and industry. In 1803, he succeeded Dr. Toulmin at Taunton, on his removal to Birmingham. Five years he continued the assiduous pastor of this congregation, but the disorder of the stone had, by this time, grievously undermined his constitution. Sea-bathing was recommended by the faculty; and he accordingly, towards the close of the year 1809, retired with his family to Swansea, where he received benefit from bathing. In the spring of the year 1813, a severe illness seized him, brought on by his original complaint, and he expired without a struggle or a groan. Though he had suffered much pain, yet no murmur escaped his lips. To all about him he expressed the most devout resignation. He was interred at Pen-y-fai, in a vault belonging to the family, amidst a large concourse of mourning relatives and friends. The Rev. Thomas Jenkins of Swansea, and the Rev. John Edwards, minister of that place, addressed the people in the ancient British language; whilst the Rev. Evan Lloyd of Wick, delivered an oration at the interment in the adjacent cemetery. At Swansea on the succeeding Sunday, two funeral sermons were preached; the one in Welsh, by the Rev. T. Jenkins, the other in English, by the Rev. Richard Evans, at the presbyterian chapel. Some few publications proceeded from Mr. David's pen, which excited at the time considerable attention. These were, 1. "A Letter on the Use of Scriptural

Doxologies, addressed to the Ministers of the Western Association of Particular Baptists;" which occasioned a controversy between him and the late Dr. Caleb Evans, who had ordained him.

2. "A Sermon preached before the Unitarian Society in the West of England."
3. "An Assembly Letter on the Evidences of Christianity, drawn up at the desire of the General Baptists, when met at their annual general Assembly in Worship-street."
4. "A Reply to Dr. Priestley, on the subject of Infant Baptism."
5. "A Letter to Dr. Thomas Coke of the Wesleyan Connection."

Henry Davies, LL. D.

He succeeded Mr. David, as pastor of this congregation, in 1810.

## Monumental Inscriptions IN THE BAPTISTS' CHAPEL.

Near this place lieth the body of  
Mr. JOHN NOBLE,  
Of this town, merchant, who departed this life May 15th, 1733,  
in the 53d year of his age.

Also Mrs. JANE NOBLE,  
Wife of the above John Noble, who died the 3d of October,  
1777, aged 90.

Also SAMUEL NOBLE,  
Their son, who died the 6th of March, 1744, aged 27.

Also MARY TOTTERDELL,  
Their daughter, who died the 19th of August, 1780, aged 67.

Also LUKE NOBLE,  
Merchant, of this town, son of the above John and Jane Noble,  
who died the 14th of July, 1804, aged 83.

Sacred to Memory,  
Near to this pier lieth  
Mr. JOHN CAPON, jun.  
Who died Dec. 27th, 1801, aged 39.

Also Mr. JOHN CAPON,  
Father of the above John Capon, who died September 27th,  
1806, aged 73.

Also Mrs. SALOME CAPON,  
Wife and mother of the two above-named John Capon, who died  
October the 15th, 1815, aged 92.

In Testimony of parental and unceasing affection,  
 For a most beloved and amiable youth,  
 Lieut. ROBERT SMITH,  
 Who, in the pursuit of military fame, died of a fever in the West  
 Indies, 16th of August, 1796, in his 16th year,  
 This stone is erected by his afflicted father, Captain Smith,  
 Of this congregation, and in the ministry of his uncle,  
 The Rev. Dr. Joshua Toulmin.

Sacred to the Memory of  
 ELIZABETH PARR,  
 Wife of the Rev. H. Davies, LL. D.  
 Minister of this chapel,  
 And daughter of the Rev. T. Edwards, many years  
 Minister of the Mint congregation, Exeter,  
 Who died Nov. 9, 1820, aged 35 years  
 And whose remains are interred in the adjoining  
 Burying-ground.

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#### CALVINISTIC BAPTISTS' CHAPEL IN SILVER-STREET.

In the year 1814, a society of calvinistic baptists was formed in this town. They at first assembled for divine worship in a room in East-street, which was opened for that purpose on the 21st of August, in that year, and was well attended. During the time the congregation assembled in this place, they erected a neat chapel in Silver-street, fifty feet by thirty-six, which was regularly vested in the hands of trustees, and on the front of which is inscribed " Baptist Chapel, 1815." This was opened for worship on the 20th of September, in that year, and on the same day the Rev. R. Horsey, of Wellington, was ordained to the office of pastor, he having preached to the society from its commencement.

#### THE OCTAGON CHAPEL.

This chapel, as its name imports, is built in the form of an octagon. It stands in Middle-street, St. James's,

and was erected in the year 1778, under the direction of the Rev. John Wesley, for the use of a congregation in the connection of that celebrated preacher. Mr. Wesley's congregation having removed to a more convenient chapel, in Upper High-street, the octagon is now rented by the Rev. George Baring, for the use of a congregation of protestant dissenters, the followers of the doctrines preached by that minister.

This chapel is a neat building forty feet in diameter, and is conveniently pewed. Twelve handsome windows, six of which are circular, render it light and cheerful. It has the accommodation of a good vestry room. Before it is a spacious area, inclosed towards the street with a large iron gate and palisades.

#### QUAKERS' CHAPEL.

'The quakers' chapel is situated towards the west end of *Hunt's Court*. The ground on which it stands was the gift of Mr. Robert Button, and the first building was erected in 1693. This edifice having become much out of repair, it was taken down, and the present chapel erected by subscription in 1814. It is about sixty-five feet in length, and thirty in breadth. The front faces the west, and the entrance is under a stone portico. The interior is fitted up in the usual neat and appropriate style of this society. At the south end there is a spacious gallery.

'The society of Friends have a burial-ground near the first mile-stone on the road to *Bridgwater*.

#### WESLEYAN METHODISTS' CHAPEL.

'This building is situated in Upper High-street, and was erected in the year 1806, by the late Mr. James Lackington, who sold it about five years

after to the Wesleyan Methodists, when the congregation removed thither from the Octagon chapel, in Middle-street. Before it there is an area about twelve feet in width, separated from the street by iron palisades. The chapel extends in depth about sixty feet, and the front, which faces the south, is about forty feet in breadth. The entrance is by two sliding doors. It is neatly and uniformly pewed, and has galleries on the south, east, and west sides. The pulpit is on the north side. Under the chapel are spacious vaults, and on the east and west sides there is a small burial-ground.

#### CATHOLIC CHAPEL.

‘The catholics are building a chapel, while these pages are going through the press, in the Crescent. The services of the catholic church are celebrated, until this structure shall be completed, in a private house in Canon-street.

#### CONVENT.

‘The Convent’ stands on a delightful eminence, at

\* This building was originally intended for a general hospital, for the relief of the sick poor. The foundation-stone was laid by lord North, attended by several noblemen, and a numerous company of the gentry and clergy, and of the respectable inhabitants of the town, on Michaelmas-day, 1772. The following inscription was engraven on the first stone :—

“ On the day of the feast of Saint Michael and all angels, in the year of our Lord Christ, MDCCLXXII, this stone was laid, the chief corner-stone of a general hospital, for the relief of the sick poor. The Lord giveth medicine to heal their sickness. Stowey and Jones, architects.”

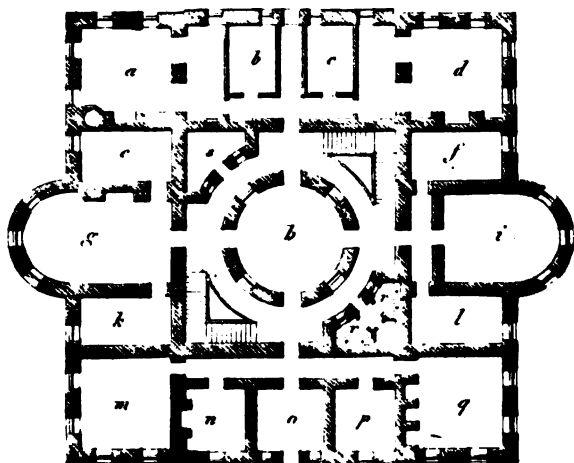
In the year 1774, the building was covered in—but here we must stop—its funds were exhausted before it could be completed—and it was at length sold to defray the debts accumulated on its erection.

# GENERAL HOSPITAL



North Front

a Brew's Wash house	g Kitchen	n Servants Hall
b Store Room	h Open Court	o Institute
c Store Room	i Cellar	p Dress Room
d Laundry	k Larder	q Laboratory
e Scullery	l Cold Bath	rr Water Closets
f Hot Bath	m Cellar	s Coal pit



Ground Plan

130

Feet



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**ASTOR, LENOX AND  
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.**

a short distance from the town, on the Shoreditch road, and is open on every side to the healthy air of the surrounding country. It is inhabited by a society of nuns, of the order of St. Francis, who took up their residence here in the year 1807. They emigrated from Brussels during the melancholy period of the French revolution, when Robespierre and his merciless partizans proscribed the clergy, and when Flanders had become the seat of war between the French and Allied Armies. On the arrival of these nuns in England in 1794, they settled at Winchester, where they resided until their removal to Taunton. The superior of this convent is Madame House.

#### CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The second class of public buildings, namely, those which have been erected for the purposes of charity, are the Grammar School, the Taunton and Somerset Hospital, the Alms-houses, and the parish Work-houses.

#### GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

The first place, in our review of the structures erected by private munificence to public utility, must be given to the Grammar School, both on account of the antiquity and the object of it, as it is consecrated to literature.

This is a large and strong building situated on the south side of the entrance into the Castle-green. Adjoining to the school is a house for the master. It was founded in 1522, by Richard Fox,<sup>1</sup> bishop of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Toulmin says that "this appears by an authentic register kept in Corpus Christi College, Oxford."—On enquiry, there is not any document whatever belonging to that college which has reference to this school.

Winchester,<sup>1</sup> who directed that the warden of New College, Oxford, should have the nomination of the master for ever. Above the entrance are the arms of that bishop, namely, *Azure*, a pelican with wings disclosed, vulned, feeding her young.<sup>2</sup>

The founder not having provided for the support of the school or of the master, William Walbee, clerk, who appears to have resided at Oxford, by his will, dated the 11th of July, 1554, 2 Philip and Mary, and proved in the Prerogative Court the 1st of February following, gave, "towards establishing a stipend for the school-master of Taunton, twenty marks in land, or so much money as may purchase the said twenty marks after twenty years purchase," and appointed the president of Corpus Christi College, the warden of New College, Oxford, Edward Napper,

<sup>1</sup> Richard Fox, LL. D. was translated from the see of Durham to that of Winchester in 1502. He was also keeper of the privy-seal, secretary of state, one of the privy-council, and godfather to Henry VIII. He built Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1516; the school at Taunton in 1522; and a free-school at Grantham, where he was born. After a number of other pious acts, he died Sept. 14, 1528, and was buried in a sumptuous monument on the south-side of the high altar, in his cathedral church of Winchester. To the wisdom of this prelate may be traced back, as its first, and remote cause, the union of the crowns of England and Scotland. For with a view to the contingency of such an event, he advised Henry VIII. to marry his elder daughter to James IV. king of Scotland; and a commission to treat of such a marriage was according to that advice made out to him, at the castle of Winchester, Sept. 11, 1499.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Toulmin says that there are also the arms of Hugh Oldham, bishop of Exeter; *Sable*, a chevron, *Or*, between three owls, *proper*; on a chief *Argent*, three roses, *Gules*; but these arms are not there now. (1821.)

**Edward Friar, and Henry Baily, of Oxford, his executors.**

‘ On the 12th of June, 1555, the said president and warden, and Edward Friar and Henry Baily, the executors and residuary legatees of the testator, contracted with William Pole, esq. of Colyford, for the purchase of divers lands in the parish of Hawkchurch, in the county of Dorset, for the sum of four hundred marks; and the said William Pole, in consideration of the said sum, granted, sold, and conveyed to Sir William Portman, knt. lord chief-justice of England, Henry Portman, esq. his son, Robert Morwent, clerk, S. T. P. president of Corpus Christi College, and Thomas White, clerk, LL. D. warden of New College, Oxford, and with the said Edward Friar and Henry Baily, and William Hill and Robert Hill, of Taunton, gentlemen, all those his messuages, cottages, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services, commons, wastes, and all other his hereditaments, called Coffins-hayes and Castle, in the said parish of Hawkchurch, excepting the lands called Chekeridge and Pennerell’s Common, lying in Hawkchurch aforesaid, to hold the same to the said sir William Portman, knt. &c. to the use, and for and towards the finding and sustentation of a school-master for ever, within the Free Grammar School, then newly built and edified in the town of Taunton, to be nominated and appointed for ever by the warden of New College, Oxford, and his successors, wardens for the time being.

‘ And the grantor covenanted that the then lessees of the premises, at the end of their terms, should leave growing on the said lands two hundred oak and ash

trees at the least ; and he further covenanted that the lands thereby conveyed *were then of the clear yearly value of thirteen pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence, above all charges and reprisals.*<sup>1</sup>

‘ And he also covenanted that he would deliver the title deeds of the premises before Christmas-day then next following, at the house of the warden of New College, Oxford.

‘ From this time none of the subsequent conveyances to new trustees, or copies thereof, are to be found, until the year 1683, being a period of one hundred and twenty-nine years. In that year, by indentures of lease and release, dated the 15th and 16th of October, Samuel Thomson, of Taunton, doctor of physic, the only surviving trustee of the said messuages, lands, and tenements, belonging to the said Free Grammar School of Taunton, in performance of the trust in him reposed, and for continuance of the same uses according to the will of the said William Walbee, grants and conveys<sup>2</sup> to sir William Portman, bart. sir William

<sup>1</sup> This shews that by the leases then existing, the full yearly value of the premises was reserved, and not granted under small rents by way of fines.

<sup>2</sup> In this conveyance these lands, containing together one hundred and seven acres, are described as follows :—

1. A messuage and tenement containing by estimation seven acres, in the occupation of Ann Mitchell.

2. All those closes, containing by estimation thirty-two acres, in the occupation of Robert Pinney.

3. A messuage and tenement containing by estimation sixteen acres, in the occupation of Nicholas Willis.

4. A messuage and tenement, containing by estimation six acres, in the occupation of Robert Moore.

Wyndham, bart. sir Francis Warre, bart. Francis Luttrell, Nathaniel Palmer, and John Sanford, esqrs. and their assigns, the same lands as are granted by the said William Pole to the said lord chief-justice Portman and others, by the deed of the 2d of Philip and Mary.

‘ By indenture of release, dated June 12th, 1718, sir Francis Warre, bart. as the only surviving trustee of the said lands, grants and conveys the same unto

5. A cottage and tenement, containing one acre, in the occupation of Mary Hunt.

6. A cottage and tenement, in the occupation of John Fippen.

7. A messuage and tenement, containing by estimation thirty-eight acres, in the occupation of John Wakely.

8. A messuage and tenement, containing by estimation seven acres, in the occupation of Susan Hodder.

9. All those five acres of land in the occupation of William Raymond.

This conveyance states that these lands and tenements are held in trust “for and towards the finding and sustentation of a school-master of or in the Free Grammar School of Taunton, or the repairing of the school-house, or school-master’s house of the said school, standing in or near the said town;” but it is proper to mention that in Walbee’s will no directions are given to expend any part of his bequest in repairs either of the school-house or school-master’s house.

The first lease of the above-mentioned lands and tenements, granted by the master of the school, was in the time of the Cromwell usurpation, and in that, and many other of the subsequent leases, down to the death of Mr. Upton, the late master, the fines paid on granting such leases are expressed to be paid to the master towards the reparation of the school-house and school-master’s house; in many others the fines are said to be paid to the master, without expressing for what purpose; and in others the fines are said to be paid to the trustees, but without mentioning how they were to be applied. In the time of Mr. Hurly, all the fines of leases are expressed to be paid to him, but without saying for what purpose.

and to the use of Henry Portman, Thomas Dyke, William Sanford, and Thomas Palmer, esquires, and to Arthur Parsons, doctor of physick, their heirs and assigns for ever, upon the same trusts as before mentioned.

‘ On the 20th of August, 1720, Henry Portman and Thomas Palmer, esquires, grant the said lands to John, earl Poulett, sir William Wyndham, and sir John Trevelyan, baronets, Francis Gwynn, and Edward Prideaux Gwynn, esquires, for the purposes aforesaid.

‘ On the 9th of June, 1743, sir John Trevelyan, of Nettlecombe, in the county of Somerset, bart. the then only surviving trustee of the lands and tenements belonging to this school, grants and conveys the same unto the earl Poulett, Francis Gwynn, Edward Dyke, and George Trevelyan, esquires, their heirs and assigns for ever, upon the trusts aforesaid.

‘ On the 20th of October, 1770, the said Francis Gwynn, esq. as the only surviving trustee, conveys the same lands and tenements to Copplestone Warre Bampfylde, John Fraunceis, James Bernard, Richard Combe, and John Collins, esquires, Alexander Malet and Francis Warre, clerks, their heirs and assigns, for the purposes aforesaid.

‘ In 1797, James Bernard, of Crowcombe, esq. the surviving trustee, conveys the said lands belonging to this school to sir Charles Warre Malet, and sir John Lethbridge, baronets, H. W. Sanford, John Tyndal Warre, and Francis Popham, esquires, and James Camplin, (now James Bernard) clerk, their heirs and assigns for ever, as trustees for the purposes aforesaid. This is the present deed of trust, and Mr. Popham

and the Rev. Mr. Bernard, are the only two surviving trustees.'

'In the year 1647, at the court of survey holden at Taunton, for the sale of bishops' lands, the jury presented, that the school-house, standing within the precincts of the castle of Taunton, time out of mind hath been enjoyed and kept as a free school, the master thereof paying unto the lord of the manor of Taunton, in lieu of his rent, four-pence per annum.

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**' LIST OF MASTERS OF THE FREE GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL AT TAUNTON.**

**John Bond, A. M. occurs about 1580.**

He was born at Trull, a village two miles from Taunton, in 1550, and was educated at Winchester. In 1569 he was entered a student of New College in Oxford, where he became highly esteemed for his academical learning. In 1578 he took the degree of B. A. and in 1579 that of M. A. and soon after the warden and fellows of his college, to which he was chaplain, appointed him master of the Free Grammar School of Taunton. Here he continued many years, and several of his scholars, among whom was Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, archbishop of Canterbury, became eminent both in church and state. Being, at length, however, tired with the fatigue of this irksome employment, he turned his thoughts to the study of physic, and practised it with great reputation, although without taking any degree in that faculty. He died at Taunton the 3d of August, 1612, and was buried in the chancel of St. Mary Magdalen's church, with the following epitaph:—

*Qui medicus doctus, prudentis nomine clarus,*

*Eloquii splendor, Pieridumque decus,*

*Virtutis cultor, pietatis vixit amicus,*

*Hic jacet in tumulo; spiritus alta tenet.*

No traces of this monument remain at present.

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\* From documents communicated by the Rev. J. Townsend, of Taunton, the late master.'



Mr. Bond has left "*Annotaciones in Poemata Quinti Horatii*," Lond. 1606, 8vo; Han. 1621, 8vo; and Leyden, 1653, 8vo. The best edition is that of Amsterdam, 1686, 12mo.

His *Persius* was not printed till two years after his death, under the following title, "*Auli Persii Flacci Satyræ sex, cum posthumis commentariis Johannis Bond*," 1614, 8vo. It was published by Roger Prowse, who had married his daughter Elizabeth, and who, in the dedication to Dr. Montague, bishop of Bath and Wells, informs us, that his father-in-law had not put the last hand to these Commentaries; which may be the reason of those considerable defects in some points of history and philosophy which are to be found in them. Wood is of opinion that, besides these, he wrote several other pieces, which were never published.\*

Mr. Bond is said to have been chief secretary to lord chancellor Egerton.—One of his name occurs twice as member for Taunton, in the parliaments of 1601 and 1603.

Edward Allenson, gent. occurs 1662.

William Harrison, gent. occurs from 1671 to 1677.

Rev. Thomas Jenkins occurs from 1694 to 1717.

Rev. James Upton, A. M. occurs 1790—died 1749.

He was the fourth son of a gentleman of Cheshire, and was born at Winslow, in that county, Dec. 10, 1670. He was educated at Eton, and became a fellow of King's College, Cambridge. Mr. Upton afterwards returned to Eton at the request of Dr. Newborough the head master, and was appointed tutor to sir William Wyndham, bart. He married a lady of a respectable family in that neighbourhood, of the name of Proctor, by whom he had several children. From Eton he removed to Ilminster, in this county, upon the invitation of the earl Poulett, (who soon afterwards appointed him his chaplain,) and several respectable gentlemen of the county, where he remained a few years, and taught the learned languages. From Ilminster he came to Taunton, and all his pupils with him; and here so great was his fame, and so well deserved, that he soon became master of the largest provincial school at that time known

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\* *Biog. Brit.*—Wood's *Ath.* vol. i.—*Birch's Life of Prince Henry*, p. 73.—*Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary*, vol. vi. p. 44.

in England, amounting to above two hundred boys, almost every gentleman of distinguished fortune and abilities, of this and the neighbouring counties, having received his classical education under him.

In 1712 he was presented to the rectory of Monksilver, in this county, and after he became master of the school in Taunton, he served the parish church of Bishop's-Hull for many years. He died at Taunton on the 13th of August, 1749.

In the year 1696, Mr. Upton published at Cambridge an excellent edition of Aristotle's Art of Poetry, with notes. In 1702, he published at Eton Dionysius Halicarnassensis; and in the year 1726, his *Παλαιά Γραμματική*, a most useful and much approved selection of passages from Greek authors, with a latin translation. He was the author of several single sermons upon particular occasions, and republished in 1711 Ascham's School-master, with notes.

The first edition of this book was printed under the title of "The School-master; or a plain and perspicuous way of teaching children to understand, write, and speak the latin tongue; but especially purposed for the private bringing up of youth in gentlemen and noblemen's houses; and commodious also for all such as have forgot the latin tongue, and would by themselves, without a scholè-master, in short time, and with small paines, recover a sufficient abillitie to understand, write, and speak latin, by Roger Ascham, 1570. London, printed by John Daye."—This work was inscribed by Ascham's widow to sir William Cecil, principal secretary of state. The design originated, as we are informed in the preface, in a conversation on education, which took place at secretary Cecil's apartments in Windsor Castle, in 1563. This book, which contains the best advice ever given for the study of languages, was reprinted by Daye, 1571; by Joffe, 1589; and by Mr. Upton, as above-mentioned, in 1711.—Ascham was latin secretary to king Edward VI. and the queens Mary and Elizabeth; he was also tutor to the latter queen in the learned languages, reading some hours with her every day. He was remarkable for writing a fine hand, and taught that art to prince Edward, the lady Elizabeth, the two brothers Henry and Charles, dukes of Suffolk, and several other persons of distinction.

Rev. James Hurly, A. B., appointed 1749, died 1783.

This gentleman was born at Crowcombe, in this county, received

his early education at Lydeard-St.-Lawrence, and rather late in life entered upon academical studies, at Baliol College, Oxford, where he took the degree of B. A. In 1752 he succeeded, on the death of the Rev. Mr. Strode, to the living of Taunton-St.-James, and was also incumbent curate of Wilton and Trull, both in the vicinity of Taunton.

Mr. Hurly was author of the four following publications :—

1st. "The Divine Mission of the Messiah demonstrated from the eleventh Chapter of the Prophet Daniel, for the conviction of Jews and Deists." quarto.

2d. "A History of the Creation ; wherein is shewn that the Copernican Philosophy is *contradicted* by Phænomena, and that the Mosaic System is *confirmed* from Phænomena." 2 vols. 8vo.

3d. "The Natural Motion of the Sun practically explained, which discovers the Longitude in all Parts of the World." 8vo.

4th. *Ecliptical Astronomy restored to its natural Simplicity, in theory and practice, upon Mosaic principles ; whose uses are also specified in navigation.* 8vo. Mr. Hurly, actuated by a reverence for the Mosaic account of the creation, and not considering that Moses and the scriptures speak the language of appearances, while Copernicus and sir Isaac Newton investigated the causes of those appearances, is an advocate for the theory that the earth occupies the centre of the universe, and is quiescent—that the sun is hurled with immense velocity about the earth—and that every planet shines without assistance from a brighter luminary. To these notions he added others peculiar to himself, and which strongly mark the eccentricity of which the human mind is capable. Such as these : that tides are occasioned by the sun—that eclipses are the effects of a vapour—and that the lucid portion of the moon is a bed of ice—that the moon is a composition of cold, as the sun is of fire—that the height of the moon is one mile and one sixth part of a mile—and that the fixed stars are very near the earth, because his telescope, of eighteen inches focal length, which could not command objects ten miles distant, shewed distinctly the smallest stars in the pleiades.

It may gratify curiosity, to lay before the reader a specimen of the manner, in which Mr. Hurly illustrates some of his extraordinary positions ; for instance, his idea of the nature of the moon's light.—"If you can see the moon," he says, "when she is very near the

van, a little before or after a new moon, you may perceive very distinctly the face of the old moon, which is gradually covered by the new growing over it. It is a curious and pleasing sight to observe these different phases, by the telescope. Once or twice, I have seen the old moon white; when it resembled white paper as viewed by a magnifying glass; but it generally happens, that the old moon, though sensibly discerned, has only a faint light, or a dusky appearance, like the dinginess observable on a full moon. The new grows over the old, more and more, daily; till at last the one is totally covered and hid within the other. The covering is *ice*, which spreads in this manner: on the left side, where the hollow of the growing moon appears, crystals shew themselves, distinctly and separately, some in lines, others in small surfaces; and in many parts there is no visible shoot, or linear extension of the crystal, but points and specks, or greenish vivid spots of different sizes. The next evening the crystals of the preceding day are lost in the increase of the new moon's dimensions: and then other crystals appear, onward the same way, and in the same manner, as before; which submit likewise, in their turn, to the spreading ice. Thus it continues till the moon is full, only the crystallization is not performed in so minute a manner as at the first. When the full moon is completed, the ice begins to break on the right side, and, as it wears away, presents the same phenomena, on the decreasing side of the moon, as were before seen by the increase." *Essay on the Hist. of the Creation*, p. 253—255.

The effect of exposing a piece of ice to the air, in the heat of summer, being an aqueous vapour, which presently appears collected about its surface; (Boerhaave, p. 436.) Mr. Hurly concludes from thence, the moon being invested with a covering of ice, "that at the time of a lunar eclipse, when the sun's rays issue directly against the moon's surface, although at a very great distance from it, they have power to excite this aqueous vapour, or cloud; which, according to the different proportions of its density, must affect the moon's surface in a different manner; and may quite obscure it, or leave it more or less perceptible. And in a solar eclipse, the moon, when on that side of the sun which is turned from us, by a powerful attraction of the rays from the place of our dwelling, leaves us but a gloomy light." *Ibid.* p. 269—274.

His theory of the sun is thus explained : “ The *heat* of the sun acts as an air-pump upon the waters it passes over, extracting the air lodged in the depth of the sea, by attenuating that which is subject to the solar fire, as well above as beneath the surface of the deep. When the upper air is dilated by the natural power of the fire, and consequently made to ascend, the lower air rises briskly after it, which was before locked down, as it were, at the bottom of the waters ; and in forcing its way upwards, it causes a violent agitation, like the ebullition of water when heated and subjected to the power of the air-pump. The influence the moon has upon the tides is to check the swelling of the waves, by her cold condensing quality.” *Ecliptical Astronomy*, p. 182, 184.

Mr. Hurly died on the 23d of December, 1783, aged 70, and was buried in Wilton church-yard, where there is the following inscription to his memory :—

Underneath this stone are deposited the remains of  
JAMES HURLY, B. A.

Incumbent curate of this parish, of Taunton St. James, and of Trull ;

Also master of the Grammar School in Taunton ;

A man of genius and literature,

Of unaffected piety, and unsullied integrity ;

Who, having performed the offices of his sacred function,

And attended the duties of his school,

With unremitting diligence, upwards of thirty years,

Was called to receive the reward of his labours,

Dec. 23d, 1783, aged 70.

His six surviving children,

With the highest gratitude and reverence,

Offer this tribute of duty

To the memory of their honoured and much-beloved father.

Rev. Nathaniel Hine, appointed 1784.

Rev. George Townsend, 1784, died 1796.

Rev. John Townsend, 1796, resigned 1820.

Rev. Alfred Barker, the present master, 1820.

He has published “ Sermons preached in the parish church of St. Mary Magdalen, Taunton, 1820,” 2 vols. 8vo.

**BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHARITY SCHOOL.**

‘ A school for eighty boys and fifty girls is supported by voluntary contribution in Middle-street. They are clothed annually, and educated in the principles of the christian religion. The girls are also taught to work with the needle, and receive such other useful instruction as appears best calculated to render them fit to be placed out to service.

**TAUNTON AND SOMERSET HOSPITAL.**

‘ This institution owes its origin to the celebration in this town of the JUBILEE, on the the 25th of October, 1809, being the day on which his late majesty, king GEORGE THE THIRD, entered into the fiftieth year of his reign.

In the beginning of October in that year, every newspaper teemed with advertisements announcing public meetings of various descriptions, to be holden for the purpose of celebrating such an important day. In the *Taunton Courier*, of the 5th of October, appeared the following :—

*The King's Accession.*—“ The public are informed, by the desire of many gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood of Taunton, that there will be a dinner at the Castle Inn, on Wednesday the 25th instant, being the day on which his majesty enters on the fiftieth year of his reign.”

In the succeeding paper appeared the subjoined letter, requesting the establishment of some memorial, by which the remembrance of the virtues and benevolence of a sovereign, of whom it may be truly said, that he reigned in the hearts of his people, might be

perpetuated in a more solid and durable manner, than by the mode previously proposed.

Sir,—Having observed, in your paper of last week, an advertisement, giving information to the public, that, by the desire of many gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood of Taunton, there will be a dinner at the Castle Inn, on Wednesday the 25th instant, the day on which his majesty enters the fiftieth year of his reign, I beg leave to express my regret, that no better mode of celebrating so important a day suggested itself to the minds of the gentlemen above alluded to.

Had I been present at the above meeting, I should have endeavoured to inculcate the propriety of advising some means, by which the remembrance of a day, so remarkable in the history of this country, might be perpetuated in a much more solid and lasting manner—that its celebration should not be merely ephemeral, but that it should be made the opportunity of giving rise to some benevolent institution, whose effects might be experienced, not only by a portion of his majesty's subjects at present, but also be felt and acknowledged by future generations. It would be no difficult task to point out, and, in my opinion, even to accomplish, this desirable object; for although many charitable institutions, greatly to the credit and honour of the place, already exist here, yet a very important one is still wanting; and as health is one of the most invaluable blessings that can be given to man, so the means of preserving it, of obviating and removing diseases, must be ranked amongst the greatest benefits that can be bestowed. Sincerely wishing, then, to see a

scheme of this nature carried into effect in the town of Taunton, I take the liberty of offering my individual wishes that a meeting of the inhabitants should be convened on the 25th instant, for the purpose of proposing and taking into consideration the best and most effectual plan for establishing in Taunton a public Medical Institution, for the use of its poorer inhabitants, making that day the birth-day of the undertaking ; and I recommend the scheme with confidence, being fully persuaded that it would be most congenial to the benevolent feelings of his majesty, the father of his people, and decidedly the most beneficial to the welfare of his subjects.

“ Taunton, October 9th, 1809.”

‘ This communication, for which the county and humanity in general are indebted to the benevolent mind of Malachi Blake, M. D. of Taunton, produced a public notice from all the gentlemen of the faculty, residing in Taunton, which was announced on the 19th of October, as follows :—

“ To the inhabitants of the town of Taunton, and the county of Somerset.

“ We whose names are undersigned, highly approving of the plan recommended in the last Taunton Courier, for celebrating the 25th day of the present month, and sincerely wishing to see a medical institution established here for the benefit of the poor, take the earliest opportunity of offering to the public every aid in our power for commencing and continuing the same.

“ We earnestly hope, therefore, that a meeting of the inhabitants of the town and county will be called



on Wednesday, the 25th instant, for the purpose of considering the best means by which such a laudable and benevolent design may be carried into effect.

E. B. Metforde, M. D.	J. Buncombe,
A. Macdonald, M. D.	H. Trott,
R. Kinglake, M. D.	W. Bagster,
M. Blake, M. D.	C. Welch,
J. Bryant,	H. C. Standert,
T. Woodforde,	Jos. Welch.
J. Welch,	

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‘ In furtherance of the above, hand-bills were circulated under the sanction of the Rev. John Gale, of Taunton, and the Rev. Francis Warre, of Cheddon-Fitzpaine, two magistrates of the division, convening a meeting on the 25th of October, to take the subject into consideration. A meeting accordingly took place at the Guildhall in Taunton, on the 25th, John Tyndale Warre, esq. of Hestercombe, in the chair, when a liberal subscription was immediately entered into, and a committee appointed to carry the plan into execution.

‘ The public dinner at the Castle was very fully and respectably attended, and the subscriptions entered into on that day were sufficiently large and numerous to induce a well-founded confidence in the future success of the undertaking, and a determination to persevere in it. A committee having been formed of the principal gentlemen of the town and county present, and the preliminary steps having been taken by them, the foundation stone was laid with masonic honours on the 11th of April, 1810, on ground

munificently given to the institution for the purpose, by George Sheppard, esq. of Bishop's-Hull.

'This interesting event was attended by a great concourse of people, who thronged into Taunton from the more distant parts of the county, to witness the ceremony. The grand masonic procession moved forward from the market-house at eleven o'clock, to St. Mary's church, where an excellent and appropriate discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. Guerin, of Bagborough. From the church the procession proceeded to the ground where the building was to be erected. The grand chaplain here offered up a prayer suitable to the solemn occasion, in an address to the Grand Architect of the universe, to bless and protect the present undertaking ; and the provincial grand master, John Leigh, esq. of Combhay, after a short but impressive oration, laid the foundation stone in regular masonic form ;

"And lo ! a goodly hospital ascends."

"It is a worthy, edifying sight,

And gives to human kind peculiar grace,

To see kind hands attending day and night,

With tender ministry from place to place.

Some prop the head, some from the pallid face

Wipe off the faint, cold dews weak nature sheds,

Some reach the healing draught, the while to chase

The fear supreme, around their soften'd beds

Some holy man by prayer all-opening heaven dispreads."

'The hospital was opened for the reception of patients on the 25th of March, 1812. It contains four wards, namely, two for men, and two for women, and will accommodate twenty-six in-patients. There is an apothecary's shop, neatly fitted up, a committee-room,

and suitable apartments for the matron and other attendants upon the sick ; and a well-lighted and convenient operation-room, lately erected.

‘ Since the hospital was opened, there have been admitted to the 25th of October, 1820, 1414 patients,

of whom were cured, - - - - -	826
Relieved, - - - - -	255
Made out-patients, - - - - -	153
Discharged by desire, - - - - -	24
For misconduct, - - - - -	13
Incurable, - - - - -	38
Not benefitted, - - - - -	39
Dead, - - - - -	42
In the hospital Oct 25th, - - - - -	24
<hr/>	
Total, - - - - -	1414

‘ There have been 7557 out-patients admitted during the same period. Patients are admitted on *Thursdays only*, before twelve o’clock, excepting cases of accidents, when the matron may take them into the house without delay.

‘ The following are the medical and other officers of this benevolent institution :—

*President*—Right hon. John, earl Poulett.

*Chairman*—Edward Bury, esq.

*Treasurer*—Malachi Blake, M. D.

*Auditors*—Mr. Buncombe and Mr. Badcock.

*Chaplains*—Rev. H. Bower ; Rev. J. Townsend ;  
Rev. Alfred Barker.

*Secretaries*—Mr. Pinchard and Mr. W. P. Pinchard.

*Consulting Physician*—Dr. Macdonald.

*Physicians*—Dr. Blake, Dr. Kinglake,  
Dr. Metford.

*Consulting Surgeons*—Mr. Bryant, Mr. Woodforde,  
Mr. Welch.

*Surgeons*—Mr. Standert, Mr. Liddon,  
Mr. Joseph Welch.

*Medical Steward*—Mr. Billet.

*Matron*—Mrs. Warren.

‘The expenses of this establishment for the year ending October 25th, 1820, amounted to nine hundred and four pounds, five shillings, and nine-pence. It had at that date a capital in the public funds of one thousand and ten pounds, five shillings.

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#### ALMS-HOUSES.

Of the alms-houses in Taunton only two are, at present, endowed; these are Gray’s and Huish’s. The others are Henley’s, Portman’s or Pope’s, and Magdalen-lane alms-houses.

#### GRAY’S ALMS-HOUSE.

The largest of these alms-houses is that founded by Robert Gray, esq. situated at East-gate. It is in length one hundred and thirty feet, having, besides the chapel and school-room, seventeen separate apartments, with a small garden belonging to each. On the front of this house are two coats of arms, the first of which is the founder’s, Barry of six, *argent* and *azure*, on a bend, *gules*, three annulets, *or*. The other coat is that of the Merchant Tailors’ company of London, of which Mr. Gray was a member.

The following inscription, on a stone in the front of the building, records the commencement of this charitable institution, and the general design of the founder.

“ *Laus Deo.* This charitable work is founded by Robert Graye, of the cittie of London, esquier, borne in this towne, in the house adjoyning hereunto, who in his life-time doth erect it for tenn poore aged syngle women; and for their competent livelihood, and daylie prayers in the same, provided sufficient maintenance for the same. 1635.”

The nature of this maintenance, and the extent to which the charity was afterwards carried, are represented on a tablet set up in the church, in the year 1751. It relates that Robert Gray, of London, merchant, gave to the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, an alms-house for six poor men and a reader, and ten poor women, with a house, orchard, and garden adjoining to the said alms-house; and also two thousand pounds to be laid out in land, in fee-simple, the profits thereof to be paid to the poor persons at the rate of eight shillings to each person, the first Monday monthly, and a gown every three years; and he also enjoined the said reader, who in the decree of chancery is styled chaplain or schoolmaster, to teach ten poor children to read and write.

Mr. Gray, in his life-time, besides having purchased the ground for his alms-house, and erected the chapel and the apartments for the women and the reader, had also named his trustees; but as he died before his will was perfected and his executors appointed, the heir at law, (Catherine Gray) took possession of his estate.

This led Mr. Robert Moggridge, at that time mayor of Taunton, to make an application to the court of chancery, to have that part of Mr. Gray's will, which related to the finishing and endowment of his almshouse, in this town, carried into full effect. Accordingly, (as the Merchant Tailors' company in London, to whom Mr. Gray left the government of his institution, on account of the distance, and because no emolument was to be allowed for the trouble of the direction, declined the trust,) this almshouse was settled, by the authority of Edward, lord Lyttelton, and by a decree of chancery, on persons residing in Taunton, in trust, to the uses of the testator's will. To them was paid the sum of two thousand pounds, left by Mr. Gray, for the purpose of purchasing lands, the net rent of which, and in the mean time the interest of the money, was wholly to be applied to the support of the foundation.\*

\* It appears from the will of Mr. Gray, that he left two hundred pounds to the town of Beverley, in the county of York, upon condition to pay to the town of Howden, in the same county, six pounds yearly, for ever, to the relief of the poor of the latter town, payable yearly at the fair holden at Howden, and that the town of Beverley should give security to the town of Howden, for the performance of the yearly payments of the six pounds for ever.—He also bequeathed to the company of Merchant Tailors in London one thousand pounds, that they should for ever pay to twelve poor alms-women, living in the almshouse newly erected in or near East Smithfield, in London, eight shillings a-piece monthly, on the first Monday of every month; and should also give every third year, to every of these alms-women, a good cloth gown, at nine shillings per yard at least, the same cloth to be of good sad new colour, with a cognizance of silver of his arms as they then had.—Among other legacies, Mr. Gray left to the Merchant Tailors'

The number of trustees is twenty ; who from the produce of the money, partly laid out on lands, and partly invested on government and other securities, fulfil the will of the donor as far as relates to the support of the house, the payment of the pensions, and teaching the children to read. When by death the number of trustees is reduced to eight, those eight surviving trustees are empowered and enjoined to elect twelve others.

In 1735 a charitable commission, which was obtained for making enquiries into the management of this and other charities in the county of Somerset, brought on against Mr. Gray's trustees a suit in chancery, which expended two hundred pounds of their fund. The loss that the original stock thus incurred was, in a great degree, made good by the generosity of Mr. John Noble, merchant of Bristol, and Mr. John Coles, fuller, both natives of Taunton, and the latter a resident in it, the former of whom endowed this charitable institution with one hundred and fifty pounds,<sup>1</sup> and the other with fifty pounds.

<sup>1</sup> In the return of charitable donations, made to company, for a dinner on the day of his funeral, forty pounds ; to his parishioners two hundred pounds, for a dinner for them and their wives, on the day of his funeral ; to his workfolks, namely the calendrers and cottoners, sixty pounds for a dinner for them and their wives, on the day of his funeral ; and to his other workmen thirteen pounds six shillings and eight-pence.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Noble's donation was by a deed of gift to the trustees, dated May 4th, 1754, and on this consideration, " That the fund or capital stock belonging to the charity had of late been considerably reduced by means of defending a litigious, unjust, and expensive prosecution, and other inevitable accidents."

the House of Commons, in 1787, Gray's alms-house is thus mentioned:—

‘ Robert Gray, in the year 1636, gave by will, to ten poor alms-women and six poor alms-men, of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, Taunton, and for reading prayers to them, and for teaching ten poor children, a certain parcel of land, the clear annual produce of which is seventeen pounds, thirteen shillings, and five-pence halfpenny—and the sum of one thousand three hundred and fifty pounds, in money, now vested in the four per cent consols;—and

‘ John Noble, in the year 1754, gave, by deed, to the said poor alms-women, &c. the sum of five hundred pounds in money, afterwards secured on the tolls of Taunton market;—and

‘ John Coles, in the year 1772, gave, by will, to the said poor alms-women, &c. the sum of three hundred pounds in money, afterwards secured on the tolls of the Taunton turnpikes; which three sums of one thousand three hundred and fifty pounds, five hundred pounds, and three hundred pounds, produced annually eighty-six pounds, making, with the produce of the above-mentioned land, the sum of one hundred and three pounds, thirteen shillings, and five-pence half-penny; and the same is vested in Luke Noble, Joseph Jeffries, John Norman, John Clitsome, George Musgrave, Benjamin Jeffries, Francis Folaquier, John Noble, John Jeffries, John Hayne Bovet, Samuel Norman, John Way, John Capon, Peter Bryant, and John Bluett.

‘ The allowances to the poor men and women in this alms-house have lately been increased, by the trustees,



from two shillings to three shillings per week. This has been owing to the funds of this charity having received many additions by legacies and donations, from several gentlemen who had been trustees, and it is expected that the allowance will shortly be further increased.

#### HUISH'S ALMS-HOUSE.

The other alms-house, which has a fund for its support, is situated on the north side of Hammet-street, and derives its name from its founder, Richard Huish, esq. who was of the family of the Huishes, of Doniford, in the county of Somerset, and of Sand, in the parish of Sidbury, in the county of Devon. It is a large, good house. The front of it is about ninety-five feet in length. Over the door, in the court leading to it from Hammet-street, there is the following coat, namely, Quarterly, first and fourth, *argent*, on a bend, *sable*, three fishes, of the field; second and third, *argent*, a fess lozengy, *sable*. Crest, an elephant's head, *argent*, armed and crowned with a ducal coronet, *or*.

The building is laid out into a chapel and thirteen separate rooms, for thirteen poor, needy, maimed, impotent, or aged men, who have been of honest fame and good report, especially true working or labouring people, who have been brought up in some manual occupation, husbandry, or daily labour. One of the most discreet of this number, who can write and read English, it is appointed by the will, shall be president or reader; and to him is assigned the upper chamber, next to the study, which is a room appropriated for keeping the records, accounts, and other matters concerning the alms-house. The pension of the president,

three shillings and four-pence, and that of each of the other twelve, two shillings and eight-pence, is paid by a treasurer, who is appointed to receive one hundred and three pounds per annum, a ground-rent, charged on houses in Black-Friars, London. The surplus of this ground-rent is assigned to the repairs of the building, and the purchase of cloth, to be made up into coats for the pensioners. That for the president to be made of three yards of broad lion-tawny cloth, of London measure, at eight shillings per yard, lined with black cotton, or other light stuff, at the price in the whole of five shillings for the said lining, and the coats of the other twelve to be made of the same cloth, at six shillings and eight-pence per yard, lined as aforesaid.

‘In consequence of the increasing value of the property in London, belonging to this charity, the trustees were enabled, in December, 1817, to advance the weekly allowance of the president or reader from three shillings and four-pence to seven shillings, and the weekly allowance to each of the alms-men from two shillings and eight-pence to five shillings.

The direction of this institution is vested in twenty-two governors, who must be gentlemen resident in Taunton, or within twelve miles of it. The first governors, appointed by Mr. Huish’s will, were, sir Henry Portman, of Orchard-Portman, bart.; sir George Speke, of White-Lackington, knt.; sir Nicholas Halswell, of Halswell, knt.; John Poulett, of George-Hinton, esq.; John Malet, of Enmore, esq.; Edward Rogers, of Cannington, esq.; sir Bartholomew Michel, knt.; sir George Farewell, of Bishop’s-Hull,

knt. ; John Fraunceis, of Combe-Flory, esq. ; Richard Warre, of Hestercombe, esq. ; Thomas Warre, of Taunton, esq. ; John Symes, of Poundisford, esq. ; John Coles, of Barton, esq. ; Alexander Brett, of Taunton, esq. ; Humphrey Wyndham, of Wiveliscombe, esq. ; Thomas Brereton, of Yard, esq. ; George Doddington, of Doddington, esq. ; Robert Cuffe, of Creech, esq. ; James Clarke, of Norton-Fitzwarine, esq. ; Rowland Huish, of Sand, in the county of Devon, esq. ; Robert Hill, of Holway Lane, near Taunton, gent. ; and Roger Prowse, of Taunton, gent.

By Mr. Huish's will it was directed, that, as nearly as could be, the number of sixteen governors should always be kept up, to be chosen for ever out of the families, or of the heirs of the preceding gentlemen, being thirty years old at least ; or in default of any of these houses, then the choice to be made of some gentlemens' houses within ten miles of Taunton, not being any of the devisees for the time being.

If any doubt or question arise, upon any clause or article of the will, the determination on it is left with the majority of the governors, or at least eight of them ; or, if they cannot agree, with the vicar, or chief minister of St. Mary Magdalen, Taunton ; or, in default of his determination, with the bishop of Bath and Wells, whose decision is to be binding ; and if he declines giving his opinion, the appeal is to be made to the lord chancellor.

When the number of governors is reduced by death to sixteen, the survivors, it is appointed, shall elect others in their room. The power of electing persons into the house, and of discharging them from it, lies

with any nine governors, acting with the advice of the vicar.

The will of the donor directs, that the minister shall, on the first Sunday in every quarter, examine, in the church, the several persons admitted, with regard to their progress in the divine life; in order, with the concurrence of eight governors, to expel the profane and unteachable. The minister is to receive, for the performance of this duty, six shillings and eight-pence, and the clerk, one shilling per quarter.

The like examination is also required previously to the admission of any pensioner, who is, at the same time, openly to promise obedience to the president.

The election of poor men is limited, besides the qualifications before stated, to such as are unmarried, are full threescore years of age, and incapable of procuring a livelihood by any trade or labour; as have not a certainty of fifty shillings per year, have lived full seven years in either of the parishes of Saint Mary Magdalen or Saint James, in Taunton; are free from every infectious disease, leprosy, venereal distemper, or lunacy; and have not been convicted of any notorious crime.

And the donor in his will further ordered, that if at any time there should not be found, in those parishes, persons strictly qualified according to these limitations, then the election should be made out of the neighbouring parishes of Kingston, Trull, Wilton, Staplegrove, and Bishop's-Hull, of poor old men so qualified. In any case, preference it is enjoined should be given to any of the kindred of the donor, born within the counties of Somerset and Devon, and who may have fallen into want.

The election of pensioners is to be made openly in the church of St. Mary Magdalen, by at least nine governors, with the vicar ; the proceedings are to be signed by all the governors present, and registered by the president of the alms-house ; and a copy of this register, specifying from time to time the names, ages, elections, removals, and deaths of the pensioners, is to be given to the constables, and two officers of the town, and to the vicar, to be deposited with the records of the town and parish.

The regulations of the donor's will, with respect to the government of this alms-house, are strict. They forbid the pensioners, under the penalty of expulsion, to harbour or lodge in their apartment any woman, child, or other person whatsoever ; they forbid them carrying on any noisome or offensive trade, particularly the business of a victualler, or of selling beer ; the pensioners are not to play at cards, dice, or any unlawful game, or to frequent any ale-house or suspected place. They are enjoined to observe a peaceable, forbearing deportment one towards another ; and are required to attend in their livery gowns or coats, at common prayers and sermons, if there be any, morning and evening, every Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, and on holidays, at the church of St. Mary Magdalen, sitting and kneeling in some place appointed by the churchwardens, near the donor's grave, under the penalty of forfeiting, in default of such attendance, unless through sickness or just cause to be allowed by the vicar, six-pence out of their weekly stipend for every offence, to be paid to the clerk of the parish. The regulations also direct, that on the days when the

pensioners are not bound to attend at the church of St. Mary Magdalen, there shall be prayers in the alms-house, and the president is to read two chapters in the bible, at a convenient time every morning and evening.

Mr. Huish, before the date of his will, Jan. 30, 1615, had built and finished his alms-house ; he had appointed the governors, established the rules, and provided for its support. Soon after this he died. His benevolent design took effect and continued in force till the dreadful fire, which laid waste the city of London, in 1666, destroyed the houses from which the income of the alms-house was derived, and no profit accrued for the support of the charity. On the 11th of December, 1672, an inquisition was taken at Clifford's Inn, relating to the premises, and the situation, boundaries, and abutments of the same were ascertained, and the property was again vested, by a decree of chancery, in trustees, according to the direction of the founder's will.

In little more, however, than sixty years, the institution was again suffered to run into decay. The person, to whom the lands belonging to it were leased, was allowed to neglect the premises, and the payment of the rents, so that the number of the pensioners was reduced to three, and their weekly payments lessened from two shillings and eight-pence to two shillings and six-pence per week ; besides which the parish of St. Mary Magdalen had expended eighty pounds, and that of St. James forty pounds, in support of the alms-house. This situation of the institution being discovered by a charitable commission in 1735, a decree of chancery, dated the 21st of June in that year, appointed

the number of governors to be filled up, including five persons residing in or near London, and the original endowment to be re-established ; the governors were also empowered to allow their agent in London one shilling in the pound for the money he should pay them, instead of forty shillings yearly appointed by Mr. Huish's will.

Besides the endowment of this alms-house, Mr. Huish left one hundred pounds per annum, charged upon his estates in Black-Friars, towards the maintenance of five persons of the name of Huish, and nearest in blood, as scholars, at one of the universities of Oxford or Cambridge, to each person twenty pounds, for the purpose of studying there, provided that they proceed within two years to the study of divinity ; this annual sum of twenty pounds to be enjoyed by them till they shall have become bachelors in divinity, or fellows of houses, so that the benefit of the house shall be treble to that of his exhibition ; or till they marry, or shall be preferred to a benefice. And by the founder's will it is directed, that in default of five persons of the name of Huish, nearest in blood as aforesaid, then the governors of his alms-house shall prefer those of his kindred, and in default of such, then again others born in the county of Somerset.

‘ The annual allowance to these five students in the University was increased by the trustees, at Christmas, 1820, from twenty to thirty pounds.

‘ In the return of charitable donations made to the House of Commons, in 1787, this charity is thus mentioned :—

In 1615, Richard Huish gave by will, for clothing and maintaining thirteen poor men, in the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, Taunton, certain property, the clear annual produce of which is one hundred and forty-one pounds, and the trustees of which are sir John Trevelyan, bart. sir John Lethbridge, bart. Edward Phelps, James Bernard, John Collins, Henry William Sanford, Alexander Popham, of London, Alexander Popham, of Bagborough, Matthew Brickdale, Richard Crosse, John Mallack, John Cabbell, and John Warren, esquires ; Abraham Gapper, and Roger Cole, clerks.

#### HENLEY'S ALMS-HOUSE.

Opposite the west end of Saint Mary Magdalen's church, there formerly stood another alms-house, consisting of eighteen separate rooms. It was founded by Dorothy Henley, in 1637 ; but has for many years, at least, been destitute of any funds, either for the maintenance of its inhabitants or the repairs of the building. It is supposed to have been originally endowed ; and on the testimony of some very aged persons, it is said that two estates, one in Bishop's Hull, called Henley's Barn,<sup>1</sup> and the other in Ash-Priors, called "Late Henley's," were settled on it. There was some years ago a woman, upwards of eighty, who, when a child about twelve years of age, was a constant attendant on an old man, her great-uncle, named John Matthews, and a resident in the house, that remembered having herself received, with other inhabitants of it, one shilling and six-pence each, every Saturday morning, paid by a person who usually

<sup>1</sup> Now the house, on the road from Taunton to Bishop's-Hull, occupied by Thomas Patton, esq.



wore a gold-laced waistcoat. The arms on the front, though much defaced, were the same with those on the two farm-houses. But the inscription on a stone adjoining to the arms gave no countenance to the supposition of its having been originally endowed, whatever benefactions some benevolent persons might, at any time, have bestowed on the residents in it. Time had for many years rendered this inscription illegible; but from a record of a copy of it taken on May 7, 1694, by Mr. Samuel Dell, we are enabled to give it to the public. It ran thus; “Mrs. Dorothy Henley, of this town, widow, did, in her life-time, at her own proper cost and charges, erect and build these eighteen alms-houses, to remain in perpetuity, to and for the use of such poor people of the borough and parish of Taunton Magdalen, as shall be placed in the same, from time to time, for ever hereafter, by Robert Henley, esq. and his heirs. Anno Domini, 1649.”

\* Robert Henley, esq. was living in 1616, and was father of Andrew Henley, the first mayor of Taunton, under the first charter, from whom descended sir Andrew Henley, bart. who was living in 1700, and sold the family estates to Charlton Whitlock, who died in 1704, and his trustees sold them to the then lessees; but a mortgage of four thousand pounds, to Henry Partridge, having lain dormant, or secreted, the purchasers were obliged to advance thirteen shillings and four-pence in the pound, in addition to their purchase-money, as the redemption of the mortgage, and from this period, and probably on this account, the endowment of Henley's alms-house hath been with-held and not since paid.—*Locke's MSS. in the possession of Mr. Josiah Easton, of Bradford.*

Dr. Toulmin says there is an inscription on a flat stone near the font, in St. Mary Magdalen's church, of which the following is a copy:—“Under this stone lyeth entombed the body of John Henley, gent. and citizen of London, whose grandfather suffered for

The apartments for a number of years were occupied by paupers, placed in them by the overseers of the parish. The buildings, through the want of a fund appropriated to their repair, were in a ruinous state, and through the number of its inhabitants, and their dirty habits, the house had become, from its situation near the centre of the town, and in the great path to the church, a public nuisance. It had therefore, some years before, been in contemplation to pull down this house, but without effect, till August, 1788, when it appeared, at a public vestry, on an estimate delivered in on the oaths of two builders, that the necessary repairs would require one hundred pounds. On the credit of the vote of the vestry, engaging to pay him that sum, sir Benjamin Hammet, the representative of the town, purchased and fitted up, at his own expense, for the use of the parish, in the room of Henley's alms-house, more commodious tenements, for a greater number of poor persons, in Holway-lane, East-reach, on a spot more healthy, and more remote from public view, which bear the name of "Henley's alms-house."

In the return of charitable donations laid before the House of Commons, in 1787, there is no mention made of this alms-house.

#### POPE'S ALMS-HOUSE.

This is another alms-house, eastward of that founded by Mr. Gray, consisting of fourteen separate rooms. This is not at present endowed, and it is uncertain by religion in queen Mary's days, and he hath left behind him Mrs. Elizabeth Henley, his second wife: deceased 6th of August, anno Domini, 1622."

whom it was originally founded. If a tradition preserved among some old people merit credit, it was the gift of Mrs. Grace Portman, of Orchard-Portman, who left an estate in Cornwall to support it. In the civil wars of Charles I. as it adjoined to East-gate, it suffered much; and great part of it was burnt by lord Goring. It was afterwards rebuilt by one Pope, from whom it was called "Pope's alms-house." It is not mentioned in the return of charitable donations, in 1787.

#### ALMS-HOUSES IN MAGDALEN LANE.

In Little Magdalen Lane there is a range of small tenements, of which no more is known than what is found in an ancient parish book, on the first page of which is the following order, namely, "It was ordered by an act of vestry, held in the church of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, on Easter-Monday, 1671, that a list of the public charities given to the poor of Taunton be entered in a book, to be kept for the purpose in the parish chest, amongst the records of the parish." In this book there is a memorandum, "That seventeen houses in Little Magdalen Lane, and two in St. Paul's-street, have been standing time out of mind, and have been constantly repaired by the Feoffees of the town lands, and that the constables of the borough have always had the placing and displacing the poor there." These houses are not mentioned in the return of 1787.

#### WORKHOUSES.

Amongst the structures devoted to the relief and accommodation of the indigent, must be reckoned the two workhouses. That for the poor of the parish of

**St. Mary Magdalen** is situated near the church, and was built at the expense of the parish. There are generally about sixty paupers in this house.

The workhouse for the parish of **St. James** is in East-reach; part of which is very ancient. There are generally about twenty paupers in this house.

**CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO THE POOR OF THE PARISH OF TAUNTON ST. MARY MAGDALEN.**

As there are many charitable donations, not connected with the buildings previously described, it may be proper to exhibit a distinct detail of them.

**SAUNDERS'S CHARITY.**

The most ancient of these donations is that of **Simon Saunders**, of Taunton, gentleman, who by his last will, bearing date the 21st of April, 1591, 33d of queen Elizabeth, left "one hundred pounds to be employed in such sort, that the yearly profit arising from the same should be annually laid out in woollen cloth, and the same be disposed and delivered to certain poor inhabitants of the borough of Taunton Magdalen, for the time being, upon the 17th day of November, for ever."

After his decease, his brother, **Mr. Christopher Saunders**, with eighty pounds of this sum, purchased of **John Towse**, of Stockland, gentleman, a burgage, messuage, or tenement, with all its appurtenances, in the borough of Taunton, bounded on the north by the land of sir **Hugh Portman**, on the south by the shambles, on the west by the Guildhall of the borough, and on the east by a little street, called **Shambles-lane**, which extended from the Cornhill (now called the Parade,) to the south side of Fore-street. He after-

wards bestowed the sum of thirty-three pounds, in redemption of the lease of the said premises, and in converting them into and building three ranks of shambles, which came to be called "The New Shambles," and made twelve standings for butchers, containing in length thirty feet and a half, and in breadth thirty feet. Further to effect the good purposes of his brother's will, this Mr. Christopher Saunders, by a deed dated Dec. 30, in the 41st of queen Elizabeth, and in the year 1599, conveyed those ranks of shambles into the hands of seven trustees; that the yearly net produce, after the deduction of ordinary repairs, and six shillings and eight-pence, should be applied to the purchase of woollen cloth, to be made into waistcoats and stockings, and to be distributed yearly on the 17th of November, or within three days before or after, to the poor people of the borough of Taunton. The same deed empowered and directed the surviving trustees, when any four were dead, to nominate and elect seven other persons, "of the best or better sort of the inhabitants of the borough of Taunton Magdalen," to be substituted in the place of the former trustees. The six shillings and eight-pence, mentioned to be deducted from the yearly rent of these invested shambles, was directed to be applied to discharge any expenses a feoffee might incur, by the purchase and distribution of the woollen cloth. The deed likewise allowed and appointed a deduction of twenty shillings, and of that sum only, for the expenses of a new feoffment.

The act of parliament for erecting a market-house, and holding a market, passed in 1769, empowered the

trustees under that act to purchase all the interest, &c. in the lands and erections on the ground, where the market-house was to be built. In pursuance of such powers, the same trustees bought, of the surviving trustees of Saunders's charity, the said three ranks of shambles for thirty pounds. For many years they had been unoccupied, because an idea prevailed that persons could purchase provisions much cheaper at the outer and moveable standings, than at those of Saunders's charity; and consequently little or no advantage accrued from them.

In the return of charitable donations made to the House of Commons from Taunton, in 1787, it is stated that Saunders's charity consisted of thirty pounds in money, the annual produce of which was one pound four shillings, and that the same was laid out in the purchase of waistcoats and stockings for the poor. The trustees at that time were Luke Noble, Thomas Newcomen, Joseph Jeffries, Benjamin Jeffries, William Stone, and Robert Stone.

#### FEOFFEE LANDS.

Though Saunders's benefaction is the earliest donation now on record, yet it appears that various houses and lands must have been devised before that period. After a great sickness, called the plague, different houses and lands having lain unoccupied, some gentlemen of the town had seized them for the benefit of future heirs; and after they had been kept a long time, with this view, and no claimants appeared, the rents were applied to the relief of the poor. At length, June 9th, 1610, a bill in chancery was preferred, by Mr. Thomas Fisher and others, of Taunton, against

Alexander Hill, the treasurer, to account for the rents and profits. It stated, that divers messuages, lands, and tenements, situated in Taunton St. Mary Magdalen and St. James, in the county of Somerset, and in the parishes of St. Mary Ottery and Up-Ottery, in the county of Devon, had then been, time out of mind, called "Town Lands," and belonged to the town of Taunton, by virtue of feoffments made of those lands to certain persons called Feoffees, who applied the profits to the uses of the borough only. Some neighbouring gentlemen, objecting thereto, were desirous of becoming feoffees; but were refused by the townsmen, who resolved not to permit any others to be joined with them. After a full hearing, it was decreed, Oct. 24th, 1611, that the former feoffments should be called in, and that a new feoffment should be made, before Christmas-day then next following.

The new feoffment invested these lands in six gentlemen living out of the town, and in sixteen townsmen; and empowered each class to fill up, by their own nomination, any vacancies in either, occasioned by death. It directed that *every year*, when the account of the issues and profits of the lands belonging to the town should be given in, the gentlemen feoffees should have fourteen days warning thereof, that they might be present at the taking of the accounts, if they would.

And as no particular uses, in many of the deeds thereof, did appear, and the court did not allow that any of the profits of the said lands should be employed to maintain pastimes, feasting of gentlemen, or law causes, nor for any other employment to ease the

townsmen's purses, nor to discharge them from contributions to the poor, nor to give relief to maimed soldiers, who are to be provided for by the state; but that all the issues and profits of the said lands should be employed to the use of the poor of the said town;

The decree therefore ordered, that *three parts of all the yearly issues, fines, and profits of the said lands, should be wholly employed to the poor of the town and borough of Taunton, and that the same should be divided and distributed by the constables of the town, for the time being, they giving yearly an account thereof to the feoffees; and that a fourth part of the issues, fines, and profits of the said lands should be employed to other good and charitable uses, as poor maids' marriages, lending it to poor tradesmen upon security for the payment thereof again, and such like, as the feoffees should think fit; and for no other, unless it were for the defence of the title of the said lands, or any other suit which might afterwards arise upon the neglect of this order and decree.* It was also decreed, that thirty pounds per annum should be paid for ever to the preacher, by the purchasers of the rectory, in reference of a farm, that had been lately purchased of the rectory of St. Mary Magdalen; and that the purchasers of the said rectory should make such assurance, for the perpetual continuance of the said thirty pounds per annum, as by learned counsel should be devised, and required by the preacher or any of his successors.



*A Particular of the lands and tenements belonging to the Feoffees of Taunton Town Lands, &c. 1821.*

**TOWN LANDS.**

*In Fore-street.*

1. A burgage or tenement, with a curtilage and garden, on the north-east part of the said street, now let to Mr. John Gunston Musgrave—rent, one pound, six shillings, and eight-pence.

2. A burgage or tenement, and a curtilage, on the south side of the said street, now let to Mr. Joseph Pitts Allen—rent, six pounds.

*In East-street.*

1. Two burgages or tenements, (now used as one,) with the curtilages and gardens thereto belonging, on the south side of the said street, now let to Mr. John Wride—rent, one pound, fifteen shillings.

2. A burgage or tenement, and the garden thereto belonging, with the appurtenances, on the south side of the said street, now let to Mr. William Blatch Cox—rent, one pound.

3. A burgage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the south side of the same street, now let to Samuel Norman, esq.—rent, one pound.

4. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and the garden thereunto belonging, with the appurtenances, on the north side of the said street, now let to Mr. James Gill—rent, one pound, three shillings, and four-pence.

5. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden adjoining, with the appurtenances, on the north side of the said street, now let to the Misses Welch—rent, one pound, six shillings, and eight-pence.

6. Two tenements or burgages, (now used as one,) with curtilages, and a garden thereunto belonging, on the north side of the said street, now let to Robert Parsons—rent, two pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence.

7. One burgage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the north side of the said street, now let to Mary Small—rent, one pound.

8. One burgage or tenement, with a curtilage and garden, on the north side of the said street, now let to Charles Poole, esq.—rent, one pound, six shillings, and eight-pence.

9. Two messuages, burgages, or tenements, with curtilages and gardens, on the north side of the said street, now let to Charles Poole, esq.—rent, one pound, six shillings, and eight-pence.

10. One messuage, burgage, or tenement, and a curtilage and garden thereto belonging, on the north side of the said street, now let to Mr. Thomas Lake—rent, sixteen shillings.

11. One burgage or tenement, and a curtilage and garden, with the appurtenances, on the north side of the said street, now let to John Hammet, esq. and occupied by Mr. James Locke—rent, sixteen shillings.

12. One burgage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the south side of the church-yard of St. Mary Magdalen, now let to Mr. Robert Beadon, junior—rent six shillings and eight-pence.

13. A garden or plot of ground, with the appurtenances, at the east end of the church-yard of St. Mary Magdalen, part let to Mr. James Foy, and part to the Rev. J. Cabbell—rent, two shillings.

*In High-street.*

1. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, with the appurtenances, on the west side of the said street, now let to Mr. John B. Capon, and occupied by Mr. W. I. P. Wilkinson—rent, two pounds.

2. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden thereunto belonging, with the appurtenances, on the west side of the said street, now let to Mrs. Pounsbery—rent, sixteen shillings.

3. A burgage, messuage, or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, now let to John Jeffries, esq.—rent, ten shillings.

4. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. Thomas Jacobs—rent, ten shillings.

5. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. Thomas Golsworthy—rent, thirteen shillings and four-pence.

6. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden, which runs up against Paul-street, at the end of which are two little dwellings, and one other messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden, on the east side of High-street, now let, one part to Mr. William Stone, the other part to John Badcock, esq.—rent, eighteen shillings.

7. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and garden, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. Richard White—rent, four shillings.

8. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, and large garden, on the east side of the said street, now let to George Brown—rent, twelve shillings.

9. A messuage or burgage, on the east side of the said street, now let to William Chaplin—rent, eight shillings.

10. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, on the east side of the said street, now also let to William Chaplin—rent, ten shillings.

*In Mary-street.*

A messuage, cottage, or tenement, formerly containing five dwellings,) with the orchard and garden thereunto belonging, now let to William Kinglake, esq.—rent, three shillings.

*In North-street.*

1. A burgage or tenement, formerly called the Lamb Inn, situate on the east, near the said street, now let to Mrs. Betty Knight, and in the occupation of Mr. Joseph Hitchcock—rent, one pound.

2. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. Frederick Dawe—rent, one pound.

3. Two messuages, burgages, or tenements, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. Harry Stone—rent, one pound, six shillings.

4. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, (now called the Duke of Wellington Inn,) let to Mr John Besley—rent, thirteen shillings and four-pence.

5. A messuage, burgage, or tenement, with the appurtenances, and a garden thereunto belonging, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. John Locke, (and occupied as a bank for savings)—rent, thirteen shillings and four-pence.

6. A messuage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, on the east side of the said street, now let to Mr. James Sutton—rent, one pound.

7, 8, 9. Messuages sold in fee to the trustees of Taunton market, and pulled down. The purchase money is invested in the funds, to the uses of the charity.

*In North-Town.*

1. A messuage and garden, with the appurtenances, on the east side of North-Town, now divided; the north part whereof is let to the trustees of Taunton turnpikes, and used as a turnpike-house; the other part is let to Aaron Rice,—entire rent, one pound.

2. A messuage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, now let to the said Aaron Rice—rent, ten shillings.

3. A messuage or tenement, and garden, with the appurtenances, now also let to the said Aaron Rice—rent, ten shillings.

4. 5. Two messuages or tenements, and gardens, with the appurtenances, now let to Robert Brewer—rent, twenty shillings.

*On Tone Bridge.*

A cottage and curtilage on Tone bridge, now let to Mr. John Bluett—rent, one pound, six shillings, and eight-pence.

*At Ottery St. Mary, Devon.*

1. A messuage and tenement, containing about thirty acres of land, meadow, and pasture, with the appurtenances, called Middle Woodforde, now let to the Rev. J. Browne—rent, two pounds and four-pence; and for a heriot, the best beast, or five pounds.

2. Butts's Acre in Ottery St. Mary, now let to the

Rev. W. Walker, and occupied by the Rev. J. Browne—rent, two shillings.

*At Up-Ottery, Devon.*

1. A messuage or tenement, and several closes of land, meadow, and pasture, heretofore called *Demesne Lands*, and common of pasture on Beacon-hill, now let to John Eveleigh—rent, three pounds, one shilling, and four-pence; and for a heriot, the best beast, or three pounds.

2. A messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, called *North-hays*, containing by estimation twenty-eight acres of land, meadow, and pasture, late *Bagster*, and common of pasture for twenty sheep, upon Beacon-hill, now let to Thomas Helyar—rent, two pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence; and for a heriot, the best beast, or three pounds.

3. A barn or out-house (now a smith's shop,) with a curtilage, divided and enjoyed distinct and apart from the dwelling-house, orchard, and garden; and several closes of land, meadow, and pasture, and common of pasture for eight sheep, on Beacon-hill, now let to John Eveleigh,—rent, one pound, four shillings; and for a heriot, the best beast, or three pounds.

4. A close of land called *Sunderly*, containing two acres; another close of land, called *Clippermead*, containing one acre and a half; another close of land, called *Headland*, containing two acres and a half; two other closes, called *Green Irish*, and the *Two Acres*, containing four acres; with common of pasture for ten sheep, on Beacon-hill, now let to John Eveleigh—rent, thirteen shillings and four-pence; and for a heriot one pound.

5. A messuage or tenement, and seven closes (now more) of land, meadow, and pasture, containing by estimation fourteen acres, with the appurtenances, with common of pasture for twenty sheep, on Beacon-hill, now let to John Eveleigh—rent, one pound, two shillings, and four-pence ; and for a heriot, the best beast, or three pounds.

6. A messuage or dwelling-house, garden, and orchard, with the appurtenances, encompassed with a common in Up-Ottery, and sheep leazes on Beacon-hill, now let to Hugh Brown—rent, four shillings ; and for a heriot four shillings.

7. A tenement, and four closes of land, meadow, and pasture, with the appurtenances, called Haslands, containing seven acres, now let to Hugh Brown,—rent, twenty shillings.—No heriot.

All the premises are let on leases for ninety-nine years, determinable with three lives respectively, at quit rents. The lives are renewable on paying fines, to be agreed on between the feoffees and the tenants or applicants.

#### TROWBRIDGE'S CHARITY.

On the 4th of December, 1614, Thomas Trowbridge the elder, of Taunton, Merchant-tailor, granted and assigned, unto ten trustees, two closes or pieces of ground, called *Tunaways*, (the one consisting of five acres, and the other being one acre,) lying in West-Monkton, for the residue of a term of one thousand years, commencing on the 28th of September, 1613, upon trust, that out of *the rents and profits* of the said closes, then worth six pounds per annum clear to pasture, there *should be paid on St. Andrew's-day yearly, unto the churchwardens and overseers of Saint*

*Mary Magdalen, six pounds, whereof they were to pay on that day yearly, to the churchwardens and overseers of St. James, in or near Taunton, forty shillings, to be by them distributed amongst forty of the poorest, oldest, most honest, and impotent poor of that parish, by a shilling a-piece; the same distribution to be made on St. Thomas's-day, before Christmas; and within a month after such distribution, the said overseers of St. James to give a note of the names of those that received the said benevolence, to the churchwardens and overseers of St. Mary Magdalen aforesaid.*

And that the residue, being four pounds, should be distributed, by the said churchwardens and overseers of St. Mary Magdalen, amongst eighty of the like poor of that parish, by one shilling a-piece, the same day; and a note kept of the names of the said poor, and such names delivered in at Easter, before the constables of the borough of Taunton, two or more of the trustees being called in. And if the profits amounted to more than six pounds, the residue to be in like manner distributed amongst the poor of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, and to be accounted for as aforesaid.

And if the profits should not amount to six pounds, then a proportional abatement to be made on each parish, and the residue to be distributed as aforesaid. And when the number of trustees should come to four, then a new deed to be made to some person or persons, who should assign their interest back again to these four, and as many more as they should think expedient, the major part to be the most sufficient and honest inhabitants of the town of Taunton; so that the term might be preserved to the uses aforesaid. And that



than ten shillings, nor under five shillings, to any one person. The other ten shillings he assigned to the churchwardens, for their trouble in distributing the same, and giving an account thereof to the executors.

• In the return of charitable donations in 1787, this benefaction is said to be vested in Betty Dewberry.

#### MEREDITH'S CHARITY.

In 1677, there was a liberal bequest to the poor, by the will of Robert Meredith, who died the 11th of October, that year ; which was afterwards subjected to, and settled by a decree of chancery, dated May 23d, 1688, 4 James II. This decree sets forth, that Robert Meredith, by will, dated in September, 1677, gave to the poor of this parish four hundred pounds, to be laid out, by his executors, in lands, or a rent-charge in fee-simple, and the conveyance to be in their names, and such others as they should appoint, in trust, that the rents and profits, or rent-charge, should be taken by the constables of the borough, and by them, between Michaelmas and St. Thomas's-day, yearly, be laid out in cloth, and making it into coats and waistcoats for poor people, inhabiting within the borough and parish, and distributed amongst the poor there ; and directed that on St. Thomas's-day, or such other day as the feoffees of the town-lands of Taunton should meet the constables, and give the feoffees an account, on their voluntary oath, of their receipts and disbursements, and to whom by name given ; for which purpose a book should be kept, and the account be allowed or disallowed by the feoffees, and that the executors might be present and join ; and that the names of the clothiers, and the quantities of the cloth

of them bought, and the rates of the same, should be entered in the said account, or the same not be allowed ; and that the money otherwise laid out should be taken as not laid out ; and that till the money were laid out in a purchase, the produce thereof should be accounted for as aforesaid. It was also ordered and decreed, that the trust and charity, and all things declared in the will concerning the same and management thereof, should stand good and be observed ; and that the four hundred pounds at Michaelmas ensuing, should be paid to the order of sir William Portman, bart. K. B. and the rest of the Taunton feoffees, or the major part of them, to be laid out in purchasing lands, called Grass-croft, or Grass-grove, or other lands, annuity, or rent-charge, and the same be settled and continued in the feoffees, or other trustees, as by the will, and as thereby directed ; and that the interest, from St. Thomas's-day preceding, to the time of payment, should be paid to the constables, and laid out as aforesaid : and that the defendants, the executors, should be saved harmless, and have their costs out of the four hundred pounds.

‘ In the return of charitable donations, in 1787, this benefaction is described as consisting of four hundred pounds in money, producing the annual sum of seventeen pounds, twelve shillings, and ten-pence, and as being employed in the purchase of clothes for the poor. It is vested in the feoffees of Taunton town-lands.

#### SIR HUGH PARKER'S CHARITY.

On the 10th of March, 1694, sir Hugh Parker gave to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of Taunton, five pounds per annum, out of his tene-ment, called the *Three Nuns*, in Paternoster-Row,

London, to be employed as follows; namely, fifteen shillings to the vicar of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, for preaching a sermon on the first of May; two shillings and six-pence to the clerk, and two shillings and six-pence to the sexton; and the other four pounds to be given in bread to the poor, after the sermon, as the minister and churchwardens shall see fit. And in case there shall be any default made, the said five pounds are wholly forfeited to the governors of Christ's Hospital, London, for the use of the Blue-coat children. And in case the said five pounds, clear in money, free from all deductions, remain unpaid for the space of twenty days after the 25th day of March, the aforesaid mayor, &c. or the governors aforesaid, may enter and distrain on the premises with costs.

‘ In the return of charitable donations, in 1787, this benefaction is said to be vested in Thomas Evans.

#### GADD'S CHARITY.

In 1604, Mr. Philip Gadd, by his will, did appoint Mary his daughter, and her heirs, to pay out of six acres of meadow, being in the tithing of Holway, on St. Thomas's-day, three pounds and ten shillings, as follows; namely, two pounds ten shillings to the churchwardens of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, and twenty shillings to the churchwardens of West-Monkton, to be distributed on St. Thomas's-day, by one shilling to each poor person of Taunton, and two shillings to each poor person of West-Monkton.

‘ That portion of this benefaction, which relates to the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, is not mentioned in the return of 1787.

## REYNOLDS'S CHARITY.

In 1694, Mr. Samuel Reynolds gave to the use of the poor of the town half the profits of three acres of meadow, lying in Holway, to be distributed to the poor aforesaid, by the churchwardens, on Easter-Monday yearly.

'The produce of this benefaction in 1787 was three pounds ten shillings, and the trustees Joseph Harman, William Pring, and Thomas Locke.

## MRS. CORNISH'S CHARITY.

In 1694, Mrs. Margaret Cornish gave the profits of a meadow to the poor, for ever; but this gift has not been received for some years. There is no mention of this in the return of 1787.

## STRINGLANDS.

This charity has been for many years under the direction of trustees, elected from the protestant dissenters, and the application of it, except its limitation to the poor of the borough, is discretionary. It consists of various parcels of land, and some dwellings, belonging to the manor of Taunton-Dean, and conveyed under six different surrenders; first, two acres of overland; second, three acres and a third part of an acre of overland, called Meadland; third, two cottages, with the curtilages, of bondland, heretofore made or converted into six dwellings, with six gardens, in the titling of Extra-Portam, and now made into twelve dwellings; fourth, one acre of land and meadow of overland, called Meadland; fifth, three acres and a third part of an acre of land and meadow of overland, called Meadland; sixth, five acres of overland in the Winmead.—Of these parcels, all but the fourth are described as situated in the titling of

Holway ; and as being heretofore of Robert Taylor, except the sixth, in which, before his name, stands that of William Gill.<sup>1</sup> They have been all invested in the

<sup>1</sup> *Copy of the surrender of Stringlands, Holway.*—William Gill, merchant, doth surrender into the hands of the lord two acres of land of overland, in the tithing of Holway, some time of Henry West, and late of William Chaplin and Hugh Gunston, deceased, to the use and behoof of John Whetham the elder, Thomas Patten, John Hucker, Robert Taylor, their heirs and assigns for ever, according to the custom of the manor of Taunton-Dean, to have and to hold to the sole use and behoof, and to the most profit of the poor of the borough of Taunton aforesaid, to whose hands soever the said lands shall happen to fall. Taken the 7th day of March, in the year of the reign of king Charles the second, now of England, the thirty-fourth, 1681, in the presence of Nicholas Marshall, gent. John Hannon, &c. tenants of the lord.

There are three surrenders more on the same conditions.

The original surrender of these lands was made by Henry West to Chaplin and Gunston, in trust to permit and suffer the constables and other the masters, magistrates, or the major part of them, to dispose of the issues and profits thereof to the poor of the borough of Taunton.—*From a MS. book in the possession of the Rev. H. Bower, vicar of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen.*

*In the same book there are the following particulars :*

ARCHIBALD THOMSON'S GIFT.—“ Archibald Thomson gave to the poor of Taunton Magdalen ten pounds, the interest to be given in bread ; which ten pounds I did receive. BER. SMITH.

“ The interest is ten shillings, to which I add two shillings, that the poor might have a dozen of bread every first Sunday in the month ; but at last there were not poor to receive it that came to the church, since which I gave two years' interest, January the 22d, anno 1693, being sixty loaves at four-pence per loaf.—B. S.”

“ 1671. It was ordered at the meeting of the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, on Easter Tuesday, that a book be kept to register all the public gifts for pious and charitable uses, and that it be kept in a chest, with three locks, in the church ; one key to be kept by the minister, a second by the wardens, and a third by the overseers of the poor.”

same trustees, to the only use and behoof, and to and for the most benefit and advantage of the poor of the borough of Taunton, without any specification of uses. The third and fourth deeds of surrender are however differently expressed, and contain a clause, which will afford the managers a clue to discover the original grantee, and his intentions, if the surrenders, to which there is a reference, are in being; the premises described, under those numbers, are conveyed upon condition, and to and for such uses and purposes as appear in and by a surrender of Thomas Pope the elder, bearing date the twenty-third day of November, in the thirty-third of the reign of queen Elizabeth, and in the year 1591. The number of trustees, in whom this charity is vested, is seven.

‘ In the return of charitable donations made to the House of Commons in 1787, this benefaction is described as having been made in the year 1591, by Thomas Pope the elder, by deed, to the poor of the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, and that the clear annual produce of the land is said to have been then thirty pounds. The trustees were William Stone, Luke Noble, and Thomas Hill.

‘ In 1796, the value of land being much increased, and the lease of these premises about to expire, the trustees let the same by auction to the best bidder, at the annual rent of seventy-nine pounds, the trustees agreeing to pay the poor’s rate and lord’s rent.

‘ The premises belonging to this charity are now (1821) let at a rent of fifty pounds per annum. The trustees are William Stone, John B. Capon, Downing Blake, Frederick Dawe, Thomas Noble, Thomas Jacobs, and Harry Webb Stone.

**STACEY'S CHARITY.**

Mr. Simon Stacey, by his will, dated 18th of March, 1710, bequeathed the interest of fifty pounds, for ever, to each of the parishes of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen and Taunton St. James, to be applied to the benefit of four poor men in each parish, and laid out yearly in grey kersey and trimmings suitable to it, to make each of them a coat, on or about the 24th of June.

This Mr. Stacey also bequeathed the interest of twenty pounds for ever, to the poor of the society of Paul's Meeting, in Taunton, to be distributed amongst them yearly, on or about the 24th of June.

This charity is not mentioned in the return of 1787.

**SIR WILLIAM PORTMAN'S GIFT.**

Sir William Portman, in his last settlement of his estates, bequeathed ninety pounds per annum, for ever, for the binding out of eighteen poor children, to be paid about the 10th of December, annually; the children to be named or approved by the owner of Orchard-House, for the time being; of which eighteen, six are to be yearly out of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, four out of Taunton St. James, five out of Blandford, one out of Crawford-parva, and two out of Brianston; but if any or all the parishes shall disoblige the owner of Orchard-House for the time being, then he may bestow the said sums in any other parishes to the same uses.

**LOANS TO POOR TRADESMEN.**

By a paper bearing date 1647, purporting to be an extract from an old book of the constables, containing the securities for the poor, it appears that there were certain sums given by benevolent persons, to be lent

to the poor; namely, forty pounds by Mr. Perry, of West-Buckland; forty pounds by Mr. Nathaniel Colwart, of Taunton, in 1577; ten pounds by Mr. Bowerman, of Hemyock, in 1581; ten pounds from an alms-woman dying intestate, by Mr. Thomas Pope and Thomas Davidge, her administrators; three pounds by the parson of Calverley; twenty pounds by Henry Roster; twenty pounds by a servant of Roger Warre, esq. forty pounds of Mr. Every's money, in 1621; twenty pounds by lord Popham;<sup>1</sup> twenty pounds by Mr. Barber; thirty pounds by Jasper Matthews; ten pounds by Mr. Wyndham; twenty-two pounds by Mrs. Rachael Portman; ten pounds by Thomas Symonds; ten pounds by William Symonds; and fifty-one pounds by Mr. Tagg.

\* The return of 1787 does not take notice of any of these bequests.

The loss of these charities, candour would hope, has not proceeded from embezzlement of the sums so bequeathed; but it certainly indicates a very reprehensible carelessness and inattention; and should operate as a warning to trustees, to be not only faithful in the distribution of charities, but to be careful of the securities on which they lend, and attentive to keep a trust full, as old trustees die or neglect to act.

#### BREAD AT CHRISTMAS.

The constables of the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen have been used, time out of mind, to purchase twenty bushels of wheat, and have the same made into loaves, of about four-pence price, and to distribute one to every poor house-keeper in the town and

<sup>1</sup> Probably lord chief justice Popham.



borough, every Christmas-eve. The money for the purchase of the wheat is paid to the constables by the feoffees of the town-lands.

**‘ CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO THE POOR OF THE  
PARISH OF TAUNTON ST. JAMES.**

‘ In the return, made in 1787, to the House of Commons, of charitable donations for the benefit of poor persons in the several counties of England, there is the following account of donations to the poor of the parish of Taunton St. James. To this account is now added some extracts from an old book of overseers’ disbursements, relating to these charities. These are copied with an intention of promoting some enquiry into those which are now unpaid.

1. Robert Moggridge, in the year 1645, gave by will to the poor of the said parish an annual rent-charge of four pounds, vested in 1787 in Mrs. Dewberry.—*Parliamentary Return*, 1787.

2. Thomas Trowbridge, in 1619, gave by deed to the said poor a portion of land, the clear annual produce of which is two pounds. This land was vested in 1787 in John Chave.—*Ibid*.

3. Joan King gave by surrender to the said poor a rent-charge of two pounds, vested in 1787 in Robert Moggridge.—*Ibid*.

4. Sir George Hooper gave by will to the said poor a certain portion of land, the clear yearly value of which is two pounds, ten shillings. This land in 1787 was vested in sir William Yea, bart. or his representatives.—*Ibid*.

1667. Received of widow Hooper two pounds and ten shillings, being a gift to the poor of the parish of

**St. James**, by Mr. Warman, deceased, and is disposed of according to the intent of his will.—*Parish Book*.

1684. Received of Robert Hooper fifty shillings, being the yearly gift of Mr. Warman, deceased, &c.—*Ibid*.

1701. Received Mr. Warman's gift, two pounds, ten shillings.—*Ibid*.

In the return of 1787 there is no mention of Mr. Warman, and in the parish book there is nothing said of sir George Hooper ; it therefore seems doubtful which of the two was the donor.

5. Florence Stone, in 1638, gave by will to the said poor a portion of land, the clear yearly value of which is one pound, which is now vested in Matthew Franklin.—*Parl. Return*, 1787.

1677. Received of Mr. Thomas Godsall the sum of twenty shillings, given by will to the poor of the parish of St. James, by Mrs. Florence Stone, deceased, and is disbursed according to the same.—*Parish Book*.

1688. Received of Mr. Charles Godsall twenty shillings, being the yearly gift of Mrs. Florence Stone, deceased, to forty poor women of the parish of Taunton St. James, which was received and distributed according to her will.—*Ibid*.

6. Samuel Reynolds, in 1690, gave by will, to the said poor, a parcel of land, the clear yearly value of which is three pounds, ten shillings, which is now vested in Thomas Hurford.—*Parl. Return*, 1787.

1694. Received of Mr. Nicholas Marshall forty-eight shillings and two-pence, being the yearly gift of Mr. Samuel Reynolds, deceased, to the poor of the

parish of Taunton St. James, which was distributed by the overseers of the poor, according to his will.

7. George Farewell, in 1622, gave by will, to the said poor, a sum of money, the annual produce of which is eight shillings, now payable by Stephen Dyke.—*Parl. Return*, 1787.

1667. Received of Mr. Farewell his yearly gift to the poor, eight shillings.—*Parish Book*.

1702. Received Mr. George Farewell's gift, being eight shillings, and distributed, according to his will, by the overseers of the poor of the parish of Taunton St. James.—*Ibid*.

8. Mr. Risdon gave by will, to the said poor, a parcel of land, the clear yearly value of which is one pound, fifteen shillings, which is now vested in sir William Yea, bart. or his representatives.—*Parl. Return*, 1787.

9. A person, of the name of ————Grabham, left the sum of four pounds, ten shillings, to the said poor, which has been lost for many years, but it cannot be set forth by what means.—*Parl. Return*, 1787.

1667. Received of Mr. William Bacon the sum of four pounds, eleven shillings, which was a legacy given by esq. Grabham, deceased, for the use of the poor of the parish of St. James, and is disbursed according to his will.—*Parish Book*.

1702. Received of Mr. ————Hurtnell the sum of five pounds, being the yearly gift of esq. Grabham, deceased, to the poor of the parish of Taunton St. James, which was distributed by the overseers according to his will.—*Ibid*.

This legacy is accounted for regularly every year, from 1667 to 1702, but in different sums, sometimes four pounds, eleven shillings, and at other times, five pounds. It is always charged as being received by the overseers, and distributed according to the will of the donor, and never charged, as is the case with some other bequests, in aid of the poor's rate.

There are seven small houses, at the east end of St. James's-street, intended for the use of the second poor, which are now inhabited by paupers.

In the before-mentioned book of overseers' accounts, belonging to the parish of Taunton St. James, there are the following entries :—

1667. Received of John Slape, gent. five pounds, fifteen shillings, for the interest of one hundred pounds, given by Mr. Clark, deceased, towards the relief of the poor.

1675. Received of Mrs. Joan Slape, widow, for the interest of Mr. Clark's one hundred pounds—six pounds.

1677. Received of Mrs. Slape the interest of Mr. Clark's one hundred pounds—six pounds, ten shillings.

1678. Received of Mr. Gale, for the interest of Mr. Clark's one hundred pounds—three pounds, eighteen shillings.

1692. Received four pounds, ten shillings.

1701. Received five pounds.

1702. Received the interest of Mr. Clark's one hundred pounds, of Mr. Thomas Dunster, of Sevington, the sum of five pounds, which was distributed according to his will, by the overseers of the poor of the parish of St. James.

1702. Memorandum, that Mr. Simon Stacy has the mortgage writings which Mr. Thomas Dunster, of the parish of Sevington, gave for security of Mr. Clark's hundred pounds, to the parish of St. James, as was acknowledged by the said Mr. Simon Stacy, in the presence of us,

Peter Slape,

Thomas Graunt,

John Brownjohn,

Thomas Bellringer.

1702. Memorandum, That the hundred pound above-mentioned, is paid for the use of the parish, and lent out again to Mr. Thomas Ford, on his house in this parish. Witness, Peter Slape, John Blake.

1667. Received, for the rent of the parish meadow, one pound, ten shillings.

This sum is accounted for regularly every year from 1667 to 1702.

1676. Received of the widow Daniel, for a parish meadow, two pounds, ten shillings.

1667. Received of sir William Portman, knt. and bart. his yearly gift of two pounds, five shillings.

1668. Received of sir William Portman, knt. and bart. the sum of ten pounds in money, and forty bushels of wheat, which said money and wheat were disposed of according to his pleasure, and a list of the names of the persons to whom it was distributed returned.

1669. Received of sir William Portman, knt. and bart. ten pounds in money, twenty bushels of wheat, and half an ox, which said money, wheat, and beef, were disposed of according to his pleasure, and a list of the persons' names to whom it was distributed returned to sir William.

1667. Received of sir John Warre, knt. his yearly gift to the poor, one pound.

1683. Paid poor housekeepers, per the order of the mayor, in the very cold and severe weather, as per a list of their several names at large appeareth, fifteen pounds.

1691. Paid the poor housekeepers in the hard frost and deep snow, by the mayor's order, as per a list appeareth, twenty-nine pounds.

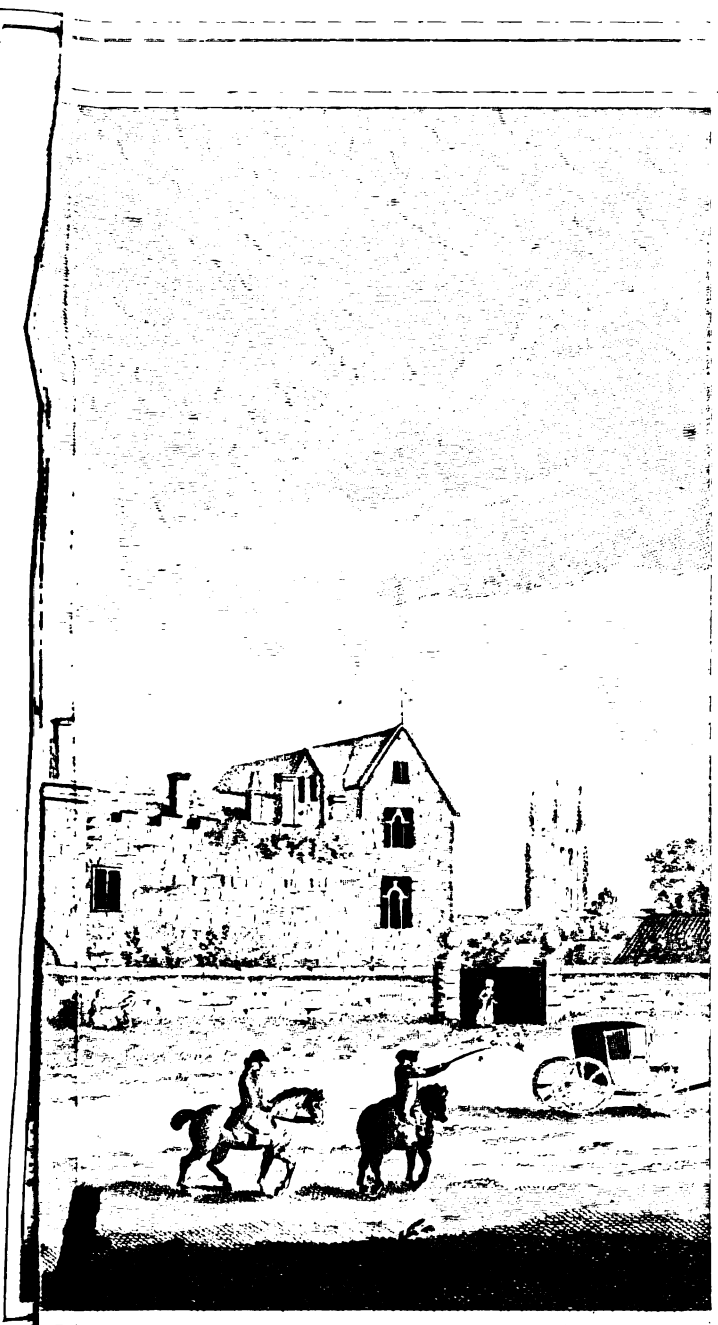
1685. Paid Mr. Bernard Smyth, mayor, for Col. Kirke, seven pounds.

From the date, which many, and by far the most valuable, of the preceding donations bear, it may be remarked, that in general, they took place before the poor's rate was established by act of parliament. The mode of relieving the poor by taxation was adopted as a substitute for the loss which they suffered by the alienation of the religious houses, from whence they had derived their principal support. The legislature, not trusting to the unconstrained exertions and natural force of the principle of benevolence, which the CREATOR has implanted in the human breast, and which revelation, with its powerful sanctions, calls into exercise, judged it proper to bind every estate to the payment of a proportional quota to the relief of the necessitous. It may, however, be questioned, whether taxes levied for this purpose have not proved, on the whole, more injurious than beneficial to the poor, by encouraging in their minds a dependence on legal claims to a support, very unfavourable to their own industry and œconomy; by giving occasion to

expensive litigations about settlements ; by placing indigent merit on the same footing with demerit ; by investing overseers with a power, that generates an inhuman turn of mind ; and by the burden they lay, checking the free natural disposition of the mind to acts of humanity. It is certain, that the records of almost all towns abound with proofs of the various and liberal donations, which the benevolent, in former times, either by investments in their lives, or by bequests in their wills, provided for want and age. But since the full operation of the poor laws, such donations have in a manner ceased ; and we find in fact that no charities are so generously supported, or so properly conducted, as those which owe their maintenance to annual voluntary subscriptions. Such is the advantage of leaving the human mind, in its benevolent, and it may be added in its pious, feelings, to its freedom.

In this view of the matter, it may at least admit of a doubt, whether the wisdom of the legislature would not have more effectually secured its benevolent ends by laws, which, instead of enacting a tax from every one, had been framed to secure a faithful distribution of money, granted by the dictates of a voluntary humanity. It is a ground of just complaint, that in most places many charitable donations have been lost through fraud or negligence ; and many more have been perverted from their original design, to answer the purposes of party, or to gratify the appetite of luxury.

In a borough, constituted like that of Taunton, they are very liable to be employed to advance electioneering designs, rather than to relieve industrious persons in distress. The annals of past times, it is to be



TON

*This is respectfully inscribed to Coplandone Warre Bampfye  
by his obed. hble. Serv. Joshua*



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feared, could furnish many shameful instances of a clandestine and partial distribution of charities, by which the voters of the lower class have been eventually and insidiously cut off from the use of their valuable franchise. The decision of Mr. Hobhouse, the returning officer's counsel, at the election of 1790, deserves to be recorded here, as founded in wisdom and equity, and as a bar in future against such corrupt abuses of the town charities. It was this—That charities must be given in the manner prescribed by the donor; and any other giving of money could not be considered as the distribution of the charity, the name of which it might bear; but would subject the distributor to an action for the recovery of the money given under such pretences, and consequently could not disfranchise those who had received it.

#### PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The next class of public buildings includes those which are employed for the purposes of justice and civil government. The principal of these, both for magnitude and use, is the assize-hall, which forms part of the castle, adjoining the town, though situated in the parish of Bishop's-Hull.

#### THE CASTLE AND ASSIZE-HALL.

The castle stands on the west side of the town, and the original foundation of it, as has been said before, was laid by king Ina. The present building is part of a stately edifice, erected by William Giffard, bishop of Winchester, and lord of the town in the time of king Henry the first. By several documents of the bishops of that see, dated at Taunton castle, it seems

to have been a place of their frequent residence.' The access to it is through an open court, called the Castle-green, where the dead, in time of war, were buried. It was formerly inclosed with gates: that on the west was destroyed some years ago; but that on the east, called the Porter's lodge, has lately been converted into a dwelling-house. The arches are very strong, and the grooves, in which the portcullis was let down, are quite perfect. Part of the south wall was taken down some years ago, to open a passage to the grammar-school.

In passing to the principal gate, the path was over the moat, where the drawbridge formerly stood. This moat was twenty-five feet wide, and twelve feet deep: it inclosed the castle on the south side, and at the east and west ends, a branch of the river Tone bounding it on the north. Besides this there was an outer moat, which took a circuit round the Porter's lodge and the gate near the present Winchester Arms Inn, and inclosed the castle-green. In 1495, the whole building was repaired, and an embattled gateway built by bishop Thomas Langton, who presided over the see of Winchester from 1493 to 1502. This gate is still standing, and has over it, fronting the castle-green, two escutcheons, one below, and the other above the window of a room which formerly was used as the

\* Warton in his History of English Poetry, vol. i. p. 68, mentions the repairs of Taunton castle in the year 1266. "Comp. J. Gerneys, Episc. Wint. Tantoniam. Expens. domorum. In mercede cementarii, pro muro erigendo juxta turrim ex parte orientali, cum kernellis et archeriis faciendis, xvi s. vi d." (In Archiv. Wolves. apud Wint.)

The *kernellis* and *archeriis* here mentioned were *battlements* and *loop-holes*.

grand-jury-room. The lower escutcheon is placed between four roses, and charged with a cross, on which are five roses, with this inscription; "*Laus tibi Xpe,*" that is, "Praise be to thee, O Christ. *L. Langto Winto, 1495.*" Above the window are the arms of king Henry the seventh, supported on the dexter side by a greyhound, and on the sinister by a dragon,<sup>1</sup> with this motto; "*Vive le Roi Henri,*" that is, "Long live king Henry." On the north side of the gateway, facing the assize-hall, is the first escutcheon repeated, with the date 1495.

In 1577 the building received considerable improvements, from bishop Robert Horne, who built the assize-hall as it now stands, and whose arms are in front of the grand-jury-room; namely, parted per pale two coats; first, two keys addorsed in bend, a sword between them in bend sinister, the arms of the see of Winchester; second, three bugle horns, for the name of Horne; the whole within the garter, with the motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, and four cherubs at the corners. Underneath is "*CRUX ET VANITAS,*" that is, "Vexation and vanity. 1577."

The remains of the ancient castle were deserving of notice. The old building, being one hundred and ninety-five feet in front, had a circular tower at each

<sup>1</sup> The dragon and the greyhound were the supporters of the arms of England during the reign of Henry VII. and part of that of Henry VIII. The first was borne by Henry VII. as a badge of the House of Tudor, which derived itself from Cadwallader, the last king of Britain, who bore on his standard a red dragon. Henry, in imitation of him, at the battle of Bosworth, carried on his standard a red dragon, painted on white and green silk, which afterwards gave rise to the office of Rouge-dragon among the Heralds.—*Pennant's Tours in Wales*, vol. i. p. 43.

end ; of which one only is now remaining. The other, with the east end, has been long since destroyed, and a large house built in its room, that has been for many years a boarding-school for young ladies. The west end or wing is the shortest, being sixty-six feet in length, and was lately standing as it was originally built, allowing for the injuries it had suffered from the cannon of its enemies, or rather from its greater enemy, time. The whole building had a flat roof, with parapet walls and embrasures for guns ; but part of that roof, within the memory of man, has been taken down, and the present erected in its stead. On viewing the back part of it, there could be lately discerned some breaches made by cannon in the old wall, which was judged from its appearance to be part of the castle built about the eleventh century.

This castle has been held by different persons as bailiffs of the bishop of Winchester, under a grant or patent from him, ever since the 18th of Edward IV. In the year 1785, by the decease of the last life, in the patent, by which it had been granted to the Lucas's, an ancient and respectable family in this town, it fell again into the hands of the bishop. This circumstance, and the ruinous state into which the assize-hall had been permitted to fall, threatened the removal of the assizes and sessions from Taunton, unless some speedy and vigorous measures were adopted. It was the subject of deliberation and of repeated meetings, to take proper measures for securing to the town, in future, the weight, importance, and advantage of being the seat of these public transactions ; but no determination was formed, and this place was on the

point of losing the assizes, when sir Benjamin Hammet, one of the representatives of the borough, applied for and obtained a grant of the office of keeper of the castle and its appurtenances, and also the office of bailiff, from the bishop of Winchester. He immediately employed architects and masons to put it in a state of sound and decent repair, to range anew the courts, and to fit up a commodious and elegant grand-jury-room. The expenses of these works amounted to four hundred and seventeen pounds, nine shillings, and four-pence; towards which sum Mr. Popham, the other representative, made a present of one hundred and five pounds, and some of the more generous and public-spirited inhabitants subscribed ninety-four pounds. The balance, two hundred and eighteen pounds, nine shillings, and four-pence, was paid by sir Benjamin Hammet himself. He afterwards proceeded to fill up the moat, to lay out the ground round the castle, and to fit up a handsome suite of rooms; rearing again the decayed walls, converting the pile of ruins into a mansion, and restoring the castle in a style of magnificence and elegance.

In 1816, the hall having again gone considerably to decay, and the town being once more in danger of losing the assizes, a subscription was entered into by the principal inhabitants, amounting to about two hundred pounds, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the necessary repairs. The two courts underwent several judicious alterations, for the better accommodation of the judges, counsel, and jurors, and the various officers connected with the proceedings of the assizes and quarter sessions.

The principal part of the building as it stood, previously to the alterations in 1785, was the great hall, one hundred and nineteen feet and a half, by thirty feet and a half, and twenty feet and a half high. In this hall, in 1685, lord chief-justice Jeffreys opened his commission, written in letters of blood, for the trial of the insurgents engaged with the duke of Monmouth, the history of which has carried down his name to posterity covered with everlasting infamy. On that melancholy occasion he ordered it to be hung with red cloth, symbolical of the tragedy which a few days after succeeded, and the remembrance of which filled the west of England with tears and grief for many years. Let the reader picture to himself an English judge, sitting in this hall, either perpetually drunk, or in the most outrageous passion, acting like one of the furies, shewing neither pity nor mercy; surrounded by military guards<sup>2</sup> headed by Kirke, a man capable of perpetrating the most horrible cruelties.

In the hall are annually held the Lent assizes, the Michaelmas general-quarter-sessions of the peace for the county of Somerset, and the manerial courts of the bishop of Winchester. At the time of its re-edification by sir Benjamin Hammet, it was divided, the west end being fitted up for the criminal court, and the east for that of Nisi Prius.

The grand-jury-room is in front of the hall, and is supported upon pillars, forming underneath a sort of

<sup>2</sup> Jeffreys's guards were composed of Kirke's regiment, then called the Tangier regiment, from having been in garrison at Tangier, and now the second foot. They were cantoned during the trial of the prisoners on a piece of ground, on the west side of the Castle-green, adjoining the assize-hall, which yet bears the name of "Tangier," in memory of these transactions.

piazza, and affording shelter, in case of inclement weather, to those whom business or curiosity draws to the courts.

Besides the hall and the grand-jury-room, there is in the castle an apartment called the Exchequer, in which the records of the manor of Taunton-Dean are repositied ; a large room which has formerly been used as an assembly-room, as a theatre, as an armoury for the militia, and for other purposes; and a dungeon anciently used for prisoners. The west end of the castle is occupied as a dwelling-house by St. Albyn Gravenor, esq.

Tradition reports, says Mr. Locke, that there was a subterraneous passage from the inner court to the powder-mills,<sup>1</sup> at present the town-mills; and, if so, doubtless, when the town was besieged, supplies were thrown in by that communication. This tradition is supported by a discovery, made, a few years since, of an underground arched way, in a garden adjoining to the castle, now in the occupation of Mr. James Chorley, of North-street.

#### OFFICERS OF THE CASTLE OF TAUNTON.

23d Edward I. 1294. Nicholas de Bonville was constable of Taunton castle.

14th Edward II. 1320. John de Buckland, constable.

<sup>1</sup> This was probably nothing but the common sewer of the castle. Tradition delights in the marvellous. Every ancient building, whether castle or monastery, is said, by the common people, to have had subterraneous passages ; and many a legendary story is produced to confirm the truth of their assertions. The most inattentive traveller must have noticed this.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.* .



**9th Edward III. 1334. Hugh de Taunton.**

He was *janitor castri de Taunton*, gatekeeper of the castle of Taunton, and held lands in Taunton under Adam de Orleton, bishop of Winchester.

**6th Henry V. 1417. Thomas Chaucer, constable.**

He was the eldest son of Geoffrey Chaucer, the celebrated poet. In the 2d of Henry the IV. he was Speaker of the House of Commons, and in the 6th of that king was sent ambassador to France. In the 9th of the same reign, the commons elected him their speaker again, as they did also in the 11th and 13th year of that king, and in the 2d of Henry V. In the last mentioned year, he was sent by the king to treat of a marriage with Catharine, daughter of the duke of Burgundy, and in the 6th year of the same reign, he was sent ambassador to treat of peace with France. He passed through several other public stations. The chief place of his residence was at Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, where he died in 1434, and lies buried in the church of that town, under a black marble tomb, with his effigy, and that of his wife, cut in brass. His only daughter, Alice, married William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, the unhappy favourite of king Henry VI.

**13th Henry VI. 1434. Sir John Daubeney, constable.****17th Henry VI. 1438. Sir John Stradling, constable.**

He had an annuity of twenty pounds granted him out of the borough or manor of Taunton.

**18th Edward IV. 11th September, 1478. William Bodell had a grant of the office of steward and bailiff of the franchises of Taunton.**

*The following is a copy of the Confirmation of his patent of appointment:—*

“To all the sons of holy mother church, to whom these letters shall come, Thomas, by divine permission, prior of the cathedral church of St. Swithin, Winchester, and the convent of the same, sendeth greeting in our Lord everlasting. Know ye, that we have inspected the letters patent of the most reverend father in Christ,

William, by divine permission, bishop of Winchester, of the tenor following :—

‘ To all the faithful in CHRIST, to whom these letters shall come, William, by divine permission, bishop of Winchester, wisheth health in the LORD everlasting. Know ye, that we, very much confiding in the fidelity and diligence of our servant, William Bodell, have ordained, constituted, and appointed, and, by these presents, do ordain, constitute, and appoint, the said William Bodell, steward and bailiff of the franchise and liberty of our castle and lordship of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, with all and singular the manors belonging to the same, giving and granting to the said William Bodell full power and authority to hold, enjoy, and exercise the offices of steward and bailiff aforesaid, by himself and his sufficient deputy, and to require and claim for us and our successors, in our name, all and singular fines, amerciements, and forfeitures, due and belonging to us and our successors, in any court of our lord the king ; also all other things which to the aforesaid offices of steward and bailiff do belong, or which ought to belong in any wise whatsoever ; to have and to hold the offices of steward and bailiff by himself, and his sufficient deputy, for the term of the life of the said William, receiving, in and for the offices aforesaid, the wages and fees to the said offices of old and anciently appertaining. In testimony whereof, we have put our seal to these presents. Dated at our manor of Waltham, the eleventh day of September, in the eighteenth year of the reign of king Edward the fourth, after the conquest of England, and of our consecration the thirty-second.’

“ Which said letters, with every thing therein contained, as far as in us lies, for us and our successors, we approve, openly ratify, and strongly confirm by these presents, saving, nevertheless, the rights, dignities, privileges, and immunities of our aforesaid church in all things. In testimony whereof, our common seal is affixed to these presents. Dated in our chapter-house, at Winchester, the sixth day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1478.”

13th Henry VII. 1497. Giles, lord Daubeney, constable, with an annuity of twenty pounds.

This year the Cornish rebels, under the command of Perkin Warbeck, who laid claim to the crown of England, under the pretext of being Richard duke of York, second son of king Edward

IV. came to Taunton, and laid siege to the castle ; which they took, but were soon repulsed ; and their leader, being pursued by lord Daubeney, to Beaulieu, in Hampshire, was there taken, sent to London, and executed. The Cornish insurgents had the year before invested the place, and murdered in the castle the provost of Penryn, who had been appointed a commissioner of the new subsidies.

19th Henry VIII. 1526. Robert Hill and William Payne had a grant of the office of feodary and bailiff of Taunton.

22d Henry VIII. 1529. Thomas and Matthew Arundel, had the office of constable and gate-keeper of the castle.

24th Henry VIII. 1531. ——— Poole and—— Drables had a grant of the same office.

36th Henry VIII. 1544. Robert Hill and Walter Halse, bailiffs of the bailiwick of the whole lordship or manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, and sealers of all measures within the castle, borough, and lordship aforesaid, for life.

4th Edward VI. 1549. Walter Halse, constable for life.

4th and 5th Philip and Mary, 1557. Nicholas Lenthall and Hugh Lyddon had a grant of the office of woodward of Taunton.

4th Elizabeth, 1561. Hugh Norris and his two sons had a grant of the office of clerk of the castle and bailiffs of Taunton.

In the presentment made by a jury, assembled at Taunton, on the 15th of December, 1647, to the surveyors appointed for the sale of bishops' lands, it is said, that the bailiff of the castle, for the time being, claims, as a fee belonging to his office, the yearly sum of four pounds, and two quarters, three bushels, and one peck of green peas, and fifty shillings more of the lord, and twelve loads of

shride wood, and one load for the tolsey-house for the lord's fair in the borough, and another load for the tolsey-house at the lord's fair in Norton.

17th Elizabeth, 1574. Jerome and Edmund Horne had a grant of the bailiwick and constablenesship of Taunton.

18th Elizabeth, 1575. Richard Rosewell was woodward of Taunton.

In the said presentment, it is said, that the woodward should have two-pence a day for life, tops and rind of trees felled for repairing the castle-mills, and———acres in the seignory, and windfalls, starred trees, and herbage of the woods.

39th Elizabeth, 1596. Edward Lancaster and his assigns had a grant of the bailiwick and constablenesship of the castle for three lives.

10th James I. 1612. Sir Francis Popham, knt. constable.

In the said presentment, it is further stated, that the constable of the castle of Taunton, for the time being, claims, as belonging to his office, the yearly fee of twenty pounds, and also a meadow called Honey-croft, containing five acres, and that the constable may grant replevins. They also presented that sir Francis Popham, knt. was the late constable of the castle.

20th Charles I. March 10th, 1644. Francis Keene, of Wells, gent. constable, by grant from Walter, bishop of Winchester.

He was the last constable of this castle.

4th Charles I. 25th November, 1628. George Browne and Robert Browne, and the survivor of them, had a grant of the office of clerk of the castle, town, and lordship of Taunton, on the surrender (at the request of the said George Browne,) of sir John Horner, knt. John Symes, and Thomas Malet, esqrs.

The said George and Robert had also a grant at the same time of the office of gate-keeper of the castle.

9th Charles I. May 14th, 1633. George Browne being dead, Robert Browne surrendered the said grant, and took a new grant to himself and John Browne, for their lives.

In the said presentment, December 15, 1647, it is said that John Browne the younger, of Frampton, in the county of Dorset, esq. claims, by virtue of letters patent, granted by Walter, late bishop of Winchester, the office of clerk of the castle of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, with a fee of twenty shillings per annum, and all other accustomed fees, and the other half of the porter's mead, lying in Bishop's-Hull, and eighteen loads of shride wood, delivered out of the lord's wood yearly, and also paper and ink, and parchment, and also four pounds, twelve shillings.

And the said John Browne the younger further claims, for the term of his life, by virtue of other letters patent, granted by the said Walter, late bishop of Winchester, and confirmed by the dean and chapter there, the office of porter or keeper of the gate of the castle of Taunton, with the manor and garden within the same castle being, and to the same office belonging, with the fee of two-pence per day, to be paid by the hands of the receiver. And also the castle-green, and castle-ditch, the keeping of the pounds and wards, with the fees thereof; also the halfendal of the meadow, lying in Honey-Croft, containing three acres and a half, called the Porter's Mead, and one stable, and twenty-two loads of shride wood, to be delivered out of the lord's wood yearly.

The said jury, in their presentment, further state, that the receiver of the castle was to have four loads of wood.

That the overseers of the water works were to receive three pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence, yearly, and four loads of wood.

That the French weare, Town-mills weare, Obridge weare, and Fire-pool weare, were to be kept by the lord.

They also presented that all the officers, namely, the clerk of the castle, the bailiffs, the porter, the woodward, the surveyor of the water-works, weares, and banks, and the receiver of the castle, attending on the steward at the law-days, have always had their meat and drink during the time of the steward's abode there, in keeping of the law-days and courts, and have likewise had allow-

ance of their horses' meat, and shoeing of their horses, and mending of their saddles, and other furniture, belonging to their horses.

And that all the headles of the seignory have used to have their dinners at the law-day, or four-pence in lieu thereof.

That two rooms in the castle of Taunton do belong unto the tenants of the manor, for the keeping of the records and court-rolls of the said manor.

They also presented that the law-day courts, and all other courts for the said manor and liberty of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, have been time out of mind kept in the great hall, within the said castle ; only the law-days and courts for the borough of Taunton are constantly kept in the Guild-hall there.

And that all the court-rolls, court-books, surrender-books, and all other writings, commonly called the records of this manor, and remaining in the custody of the clerk of the castle of Taunton, do properly belong unto the tenants of this manor, and not unto the lord of this manor.

And that the courts for the said manor, borough, and liberty, are as follow ; namely, two law-days yearly for the manor of Taunton-Dean, kept by the steward of the bishoprick ; one court every three weeks, for the tenants, kept by the clerk of the castle of Taunton ; two law-days for the borough, and a court there every fortnight, kept also by the said clerk ; and two law-day courts, and another court every three weeks, for the liberty, also kept by the said clerk.

And they also presented that the tithingmen of Withiel, Tolland, Leigh-Flory, Ninehead-Flory, Combe-Flory, Heathfield, Lydeard, Saint-Lawrence, Bagborough, Cotheleston, Lydeard-Puncherton, Pixton, Holcombe, Oake, Bradford, Holford Coursley, Ninehead-Monkton, Knights-Leigh (now Anger's-Leigh,) Hill-Farrance, Heale, Cheddon, Prior's-Blagdon, Feichampton, Norton, Orchard, Obridge, Fons George (Wilton,) Extra Portam, and Langford, do give yearly one shilling each, for not bringing in their measures in their several tithings, on the two several law-days, to be tried by the standard.

And that all treasure-trove and coinage, within the liberty of Taunton-Dean, belong to the lord of the manor.

They also presented the following annual rents, due from the freeholders under-mentioned :

	s.	d.
Earl of Hertford, for land lying in Laurence-Lydeard, -	2	0
Earl of Bath, for land in Norton, - - - - -	0	3
Sir John Stawel, for land in Cotheleston, - - - - -	1	0
Arthur, lord Capel, for land in Knights-leigh, - - -	2	0
John Malet, esq. for land in Nethe and Lydeard-Puncherton, -	3	0
Late sir William Portman, bart. for land in Orchard, - -	1	0
John Warre, esq. for land at Hestercombe, - - - - -	2	0
——— Fraunceis, for land in Combe-Flory, - - - - -	2	0
Sir Edward Waldegrave, knight, for land at Harnam, - -	2	0
——— Sanford, esq. for land at Ninehead-Flory and		
Withiel, - - - - -	1	4
John Pyne, esq. for land in Fideoak, - - - - -	2	0
Edward Warre, esq. for land in Chipley, - - - - -	1	0
William ———, esq. for land at Hillsarrance, - - - - -	1	0
——— Luttrell, esq. for land at Heathfield, - - - - -	1	0
Edward Morgan, esq. for land in East-Lydeard, - - - - -	1	0
Richard Farthing, for lands, - - - - -	1	0
John Coventry, esq. for Corfe, - - - - -	1	0

1785. Benjamin Hammet, esq. afterwards sir Benjamin Hammet, knt. had a grant of the office of keeper of the castle, and bailiff of the manor and liberty of Taunton.

Oct. 12th, 1786. John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, esquires, had a grant of the office of bailiff of the bailiwick of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, and of sealers of measures and weights, within the castle, borough, and lordship of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, and keepers of the castle of Taunton.

*The following is a copy of the Patent by which they were appointed, and the Confirmation of the same :—*

“ To all christian people to whom this present writing shall come, Brownlow, by divine permission, bishop of Winchester, sendeth

health in the LORD everlasting. Know ye, that we, the aforesaid bishop, for divers good causes and considerations us especially moving, have given, granted, and confirmed, and for us and our successors, do by these presents give, grant, and confirm to our beloved and faithful John Hammet, esquire, James Esdaile Hammet, esquire, sons of sir Benjamin Hammet, knt. alderman of the city of London, and to Edward Jeffries Esdaile, son of William Esdaile, of the said city of London, banker, the office of bailiff of the whole bailiwick of the lordship or manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, in the county of Somerset, and also the office of bailiff of the whole liberty of Taunton and Taunton-Dean aforesaid, and the office of sealing of all the measures and weights within the castle, borough, and lordship of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, and full power and authority of doing and executing all other things which to the said offices, or any of them, do or ought to belong in any manner whatsoever. And them the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, bailiff and bailiffs of the whole liberty aforesaid, for us and our successors, we make, depute, ordain, and constitute by these presents, to have, hold, occupy, and exercise the office aforesaid, and every of them, to the aforesaid John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and their assigns, and to either of them, for and during the lives of the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and of either of them longest living, by himself, or by his and their sufficient deputy or deputies, or by the deputy of either of them. We give also and grant by these presents, for us and our successors, to the aforesaid John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and their assigns, and to either of them, for and during the lives of them and either of them longest living, for the exercise and execution of the offices aforesaid, one annuity or yearly rent of four pounds, issuing and payable out of our manor and lordship of Taunton-Dean aforesaid, and also all other fees, regards, profits, commodities, and emoluments whatsoever to the said offices or to either of them belonging or appertaining, or which have been held, enjoyed, or used, with the offices aforesaid, or either of them; To have, hold, enjoy, and yearly to receive the aforesaid annuity or yearly rent of four pounds, and the profits, fees, regards, and commodities aforesaid, to the before-



named John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and their assigns, for and during the lives of them the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and to either of them longest living, at the feasts of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangel, by the hands of the receivers and collectors of the rents of our manor or lordship of Taunton and Taunton-Dean aforesaid, by equal portions, to be paid; and if, and so often as it shall happen, the said annuity or yearly rent of four pounds, or any part thereof, or any the profits, fees, regards, and commodities aforesaid, shall be in arrear in part or in the whole, after either of the feasts aforesaid, or which as aforesaid ought to be paid, by the space of fifteen days, then and so often it shall be lawful to and for the aforesaid John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and their assigns, and either of them, during the lives of them, and either of them longest living, into our aforesaid lordship or manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean aforesaid, or into any part thereof, to enter and distrain, and the distresses so there taken lawfully to take, drive, carry away, and detain, and keep, until the said annuity or yearly rent, together with the arrearages thereof (if any shall be) shall be to them fully paid and satisfied. And moreover know ye, that we, the aforesaid bishop, have given, granted, and confirmed, and for us and our successors by these presents do give, grant, and confirm to the aforesaid John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, the office of keeper of our Castle of Taunton aforesaid, and all and singular the houses and edifices to the said Castle belonging or appertaining. And them the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and either of them, keeper and keepers of the said Castle, and of all and singular the houses and edifices aforesaid, we ordain, make, and constitute by these presents, to have, hold, and enjoy the said office of keeper of the Castle of Taunton aforesaid, to them the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and to either of them, for and during the lives of them, and either of them longest living, by themselves, or by their sufficient deputy or deputies, to be exercised, with all and singular the profits, fees, advantages, and commodities whatsoever to the said office belonging or appertaining, as fully and wholly, and in as ample and beneficial manner and

form, as James Lucas, and Simon Lucas, and Thomas Dewey, and either of them, or any other keeper or keepers of the aforesaid Castle had held and enjoyed the same. We will also, and for us and our successors we grant, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and either of them, for and during the lives of them the said John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, Edward Jeffries Esdaile, and either of them longest living, to inhabit and dwell within the houses and edifices of the said Castle at the will of them and either of them, together with his wife and whole family, without any rent or any thing else to be yielded, paid, and done therefore to us or our successors. In witness whereof we have caused our episcopal seal to be set to these presents. Dated the twelfth day of October, in the 26th year of the reign of our most illustrious prince and lord, George the third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, and so forth, and in the year of our lord, 1786, and of our translation the sixth.

“ We, Newton Ogle, doctor in divinity, dean of the cathedral church of the Holy Trinity of Winchester, in the county of Southampton, and the chapter of the same church, being in our chapter-house at Winchester aforesaid capitularly assembled and making a chapter there, have ratified and confirmed, and for us and our successors, do, by these presents, by our capitular authority, ratify and confirm the grant, donation, and concession of the office of bailiff of the whole bailiwick of the lordship or manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, in the county of Somerset, and also of bailiff of the whole liberty, and office of scaling of all weights and measures within the castle, borough, and lordship of Taunton aforesaid, by the honourable and right reverend father in God, Brownlow, by divine permission, lord bishop of Winchester, to John Hammet, James Esdaile Hammet, and Edward Jeffries Esdaile, in the letters patent to these presents annexed, made and granted, under the same manner and form as in the said letters patent is recited, specified, and contained, hereby approving and holding as firm and valid, so far as in us lies, and by the laws and statutes of this realm we can or may, all and every thing herein contained. In testimony whereof we have caused our common chapter-seal to be affixed to these presents. Given in our chapter-house at Winchester aforesaid, the 25th day of November, 1786.”

**TOWN-HALL.**

The next place devoted to the purposes of civil government is the town-hall. This is a room properly fitted up for the purpose, on the ground-floor of a large and elegant building, called the Market-house. The magistrates acting for the hundred of Taunton-Dean sit here every Wednesday and Saturday, at twelve o'clock, for the purpose of hearing and redressing complaints.

**BRIDEWELL.**

There was formerly, near Tone-bridge, a bridewell, belonging to the county of Somerset. As it was found too small, and had fallen into great decay, so that it was difficult to keep prisoners safe therein, the justices for the county, in the years 1753 and 1754, directed that it should be sold, and a large gaol erected in the adjoining parish of Wilton, on a piece of ground purchased of John Mallack, esq.

**MARKET-HOUSE.**

Though there are not in this town structures separately erected for the purposes of entertainment and pleasure, the building, called the Market-house, is formed on a plan comprehensive of rooms for these uses, as well as of a neat town-hall for the administration of justice. In the chapter devoted to an account of the present state of the town, this building will be more particularly described.

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## CHAPTER III.

CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE TOWN—THE LATE CORPORATION—PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—LIST OF MEMBERS RETURNED TO PARLIAMENT FOR THIS BOROUGH.

**T**HE police of this town is subject to the authority and direction of the justices of the peace for the county of Somerset, but more especially of those acting for the hundred of Taunton-Dean, and under them, of the officers annually chosen at the bishop of Winchester's court leet.

The court leet is of early date, and arose out of the connection of the town with the see of Winchester. In this court there are annually chosen by the jury two portreeves, two bailiffs, two constables, and six tythingmen, or petty constables.

The province of the portreeves is to collect the bishop's rents, and they formerly enjoyed the privilege of granting leases of standings in the market.<sup>1</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> The portreeves were originally the bishop's officers, who collected his customs and tolls. In such of the king's towns, or towns in ancient demesne, which were held in fee-farm, the burgesses were all jointly bound for the true payment of the fee-farm rent, and chose one of their own body to collect the rents and answer the fee-farm to the king, and this officer was called *portreeve*, who in time grew up to be the chief magistrate of the borough.—*Gurdon's Hist. of Parl.* vol. i. p. 228.—*Brady on Boroughs*, p. 16.

was lost by the operation of the late market-house act, and as a compensation for it, they are, under the same act, entitled to an annual rent, or yearly sum of eighteen pounds, clear of all taxes and deductions whatever ; for the payment of which, the rents and profits of the market are bound.

Since the dissolution of the corporation, the bailiffs, by a resolution of the house of commons, are the returning officers of the borough. They are the principal peace-officers of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, and the organs by which all public meetings of the town are called, at which they usually preside. They also attend the lord of the manor's courts.

The constables formerly enjoyed the chief authority of the town, and were generally invested with the power of distributing the charities left to the poor. This last privilege they still retain, in many instances derived from the appointment of the respective donors.

#### THE LATE CORPORATION.

Taunton, though a very ancient and populous town,<sup>1</sup> was not incorporated by royal charter, till the reign of Charles the first, 1627. This deed changed the constitution of the borough, and invested the civil power in the hands of a mayor, justice, aldermen, and burgesses.

This instance of royal favour was not, however, sufficient to attach them to the interests of the king in the civil wars ; for in this town a spirited stand was made against the unconstitutional measures of Charles I. and the cause of the parliament found here firm adherents, and a most important support. This con-

<sup>1</sup> Valde antiqua et populosa, is the language of the charter. T.

duct drew on it, afterwards, the resentment, and awakened the jealousy of Charles II. who demolished its walls, and took away its charter, by a *quo warranto*, in 1660. It is reported he also seized and gave away an estate in Ireland, of which the corporation was then possessed. A certificate<sup>1</sup> found among the records of the parish, and written above a hundred and thirty years since, favours the supposition, that it had then such an estate. It continued without its charter for seventeen years, when the same king, at the suit and intercession of Dr. Peter Mew, then bishop of Bath and Wells, granted it a new charter.

This charter enlarged the boundaries of the borough beyond its ancient limits, and imparted to the body

<sup>1</sup> The certificate runs thus:—"Burgo de Taunton, in co. Somerset. We, the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the town and corporation of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, do hereby certify whom it doth or may concern, that we do not know of, or can find entered in any books or writings belonging to the corporation aforesaid, that either Col. John Gorges, or his son, or any other person or persons, have, or ever had, any grant from the said corporation, of any of the lands lying in the burrows of Ruth, Conruth, in the county of West-Meath, in Ireland."

N. B. Thomas Gorges and John Gorges were Feoffees of the town lands, in 1659.—*Locke's MSS.* T.

Thomas Gorges was member for Taunton in 1654, 1656, and 1658; and John Gorges in 1654.—Edward Gorges was member for Somerset, in 1688.

In the Supplementary Return of Charitable Donations, 1788, there is inserted the following statement relating to this property:—"There is an account of some land lying in Burrough of Rutheon Rutts, in the county of Westmeath, in Ireland, belonging to the corporation of Taunton; for what purpose cannot learn. It seems a Col. John George, or his son, claimed it under false pretensions of a grant from corporation; which they totally deny."

corporate a jurisdiction through not only the town, but the parishes of St. Mary Magdalen and St. James; and in the most ample manner and form, co-extensive with their boundaries.

It appointed that the corporation should consist of a mayor, two aldermen, fourteen capital burgesses, (including the mayor and aldermen) chosen from the more upright and discreet of the burgesses or free-men of the borough, and ten inferior burgesses; and that the aldermen, capital and inferior burgesses, should bear the name of "the common council" of the borough, whose province should be to aid the mayor in all causes and transactions relative to the borough. The capital burgesses were invested with their office for life, unless removed for misconduct; as were also the inferior burgesses, unless removed for misconduct, or advanced to the office of capital burgesses.

The charter directed the election and nomination of a person, discreet and skilled in the laws of England, to hold during royal pleasure the office of recorder; who, by himself, or deputy, should perform, within the precincts of the borough, all the services of that office. It assigned to them also the power of choosing a man of discretion and probity, to act as town-clerk, during the pleasure of the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses; and who should be allowed all the fees and profits of office belonging to the town-clerk in any borough or city. As the charter nominated the first gentlemen, who filled under it the posts of recorder and town-clerk, so it provided that no one, in future, elected to either of these posts, should be allowed to act in it before he were sworn, and the nomination had been approved by the king under his sign manual.

The charter assigned the corporation the name of "The Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough and Town of Taunton, in the County of Somerset." It granted to them the right of using a common seal, and of changing it for one they might judge better, from time to time. It also allowed them one or two servants, under the name of serjeants at mace, to execute warrants and precepts, to attend the mayor, to carry before him gilt or silver maces, with the king's arms engraven on them,<sup>1</sup> and to perform other business within the precincts of the borough.

There was in this charter a remarkable clause, which provided that there should always be six justices of the county, nominated and appointed, from time to time, by the chancellor or keeper of the great seal, who should be justices within the borough and its precincts, to act as the other justices of the borough, but that no one of them should be compelled to accept the mayoralty or any other office in the borough; or be subject to any punishments or penalties imposed by the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses. This appointment was evidently intended as a check upon the magistrates incorporated by the charter; and was strongly expressive of the king's disgust and suspicions.

The last commission, appointing such adjunct justices, bears date the 4th of March, 1767. The former commission had expired several years before,

<sup>1</sup> During the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell, the mace carried before the mayor had on it the arms of the Protector, but under the new charter, the arms of Charles II. engraven on silver plates, were screwed over the other arms. In this state the maces exist now, or did very lately.



at the death of sir William Pynsent, bart. the survivor, under a former nomination. On an application made by some of the inhabitants of the borough, a new commission constituted Henry William Portman, Coplestone Warre Bampfylde, John Collins, William Hawker, John Halliday, esqrs. and Francis Warre, clerk, "Justices to keep the peace from time to time, within the borough and town of Taunton, and Taunton St. James, and the liberties and precincts of the same, according to the tenor, form, and effect of certain letters patent, granted to the said borough and town, bearing date the 13th day of September, in the 29th year of the reign of Charles II. late king of England."\*

\* This commission also appointed that these six gentlemen "should have *full power and authority*, together with the mayor and other justices of the said borough and town, and liberties and precincts of the same, to perform, do, and execute *all and singular the things within the said borough and town, and liberties and precincts of the same*, which to the office of a justice of the peace belong, *in as ample manner and form* as the said mayor of the aforesaid borough and town, and the *other justices* of the same borough and town, or *any one of them*, within the aforesaid borough and town, or the liberties and precincts of the same, may, or ought to do, by virtue of the said letters patent, or any other letters patent in that behalf granted, or to be granted, any thing in the said letters patent contained or specified to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding."

It also "commanded the mayor, and other justices of the borough and town, for the time being, to admit into their society the above-named justices, as well to the *sessions* of the peace, to be held within the borough and town, as to *do all other things* which belong or appertain to the office of justice of the peace, within the borough and town aforesaid, and the liberties and precincts of the same; and that all and singular the serjeants at mace, the constables, sub-bailiffs, keepers of prisons and gaols, and all other officers and ministers, whom it doth or may concern, in the execution of the

Though Taunton is a town of high antiquity, and has been, through many ages, a very flourishing place, and of great importance in the county; and though the second charter gave the corporation the power of holding estates, to the clear annual value of three hundred pounds; yet it had neither land, nor houses, nor joint stock of money.

‘ The corporation existed under this charter until the year 1792, when the members thereof being reduced to eleven, a number less than the majority of the capital and inferior burgesses together, the charter became nullified, and the corporate body virtually dissolved and divested of its powers. The circumstances, which more immediately led to the dissolution of the corporation, are detailed in the following account of the proceedings under a writ of mandamus from the court of king’s bench, for electing a mayor in the above-mentioned year.

‘ On the death of the earl of Guilford, in July, 1792, who was the recorder of the borough and town of Taunton, that office became vacant, and disputes arose about choosing his successor. Sir Thomas Gunston, and some other members of the body corporate, proposed to elect Mr. Pitt, as the future recorder, whilst the then mayor, Dr. Cabbell, and some others of the premises, should be, from time to time, attendant upon and obedient to the said justices.”

It further commanded those six justices, “ to apply themselves to all and singular the premises to be done and executed in form aforesaid, and to do and execute the same with effect.”—*From a copy of the commission in the hands of the late Mr. John Norman, who favoured the author with an opportunity to inspect and transcribe it.* T.

burgesses, wished that either William Moreland, esq. or the earl of Guilford, the late recorder's son, should fill the office.

‘ These disputes continued till the day came on, (August 27th,) for electing, according to the terms of the charter, the mayor and other officers of the corporation. On that day, the mayor, Dr. Cabbell, did not attend at the Guildhall, the place of election, but absented himself, for the purpose, as it was asserted, of preventing the common council from choosing either a mayor or recorder, or doing any other business on the charter-day, thinking that such person would not have been elected to fill the office of recorder, as he wished, and knowing that when the mayor and common council should assemble the next day, in pursuance of the power given under the act of the 11th of Geo. I. they could only choose a mayor and two aldermen, and could not elect a recorder or any capital or inferior burgess.

‘ Accordingly the next day, the 28th of August, the mayor, eight capital burgesses, and two inferior burgesses, being the whole number of the corporate body then in existence, assembled at the Guildhall, in pursuance of the act of the 11th of George I. and elected sir Thomas Gunston, knt. into the office of mayor, and Thomas Foy and William Pring, both capital burgesses, into the office of alderman for the year ensuing, to commence, according to the charter, on the Monday after Michaelmas-day then next following, on which latter day, being the first of October, 1792, the mayor and two aldermen elect attended at the Guildhall, for the purpose of being sworn into their

respective offices. Dr. Cabbell, the mayor, whose duty it was to administer the oaths on this occasion to the persons elected, refused so to do, without assigning any reason for the same, further than by saying, "he was advised by his counsel not to do it."

' On the first of November following, the late mayor, Dr. Cabbell, served sir Thomas Gunston, the mayor elect, with the following notice :—

" To sir Thomas Gunston, knight.

" Sir Thomas,—I give you this written notice, that my reason for refusing to swear you into office, as mayor of the borough and town of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, on the first day of October instant, was, because at the time when your supposed election took place, there was not in existence a major part of the select body of the corporation of the said borough and town, and for that I was advised I should not be justified in so doing, having been previously informed of the decision of the court of King's Bench, in the case of the King against Belringer, determined last Trinity term, and reported by Durnford and East, in the reports of that term.

" Your humble servant,

Taunton, 27th October, 1792.

J. Cabbell.

' Immediately after the receipt of this notice, sir Thomas Gunston applied to the court of King's Bench for a writ of mandamus to compel Dr. Cabbell, the late mayor, to swear him into office as mayor of the borough of Taunton, for the year ensuing, or to shew cause to the contrary ; whereupon Dr. Cabbell in the return, made in obedience to the said writ of mandamus, after setting forth the substance of the charter, pleaded,

“ That of the common council in the beginning of the year 1791, there were in existence only eleven members, namely, seven capital and four inferior burgesses. On the charter-day in that year, Dr. Cabbell was chosen mayor, nine only out of the eleven being present, when two of the inferior were chosen capital burgesses, and from that time there have been only eleven, namely, nine capital and two inferior burgesses.

‘ Dr. Cabbell was sworn in by the acting mayor of the preceding year, and in consequence acted as mayor, but was absent on the last charter-day, though with no such view as stated in the affidavit. At this time he had received an intimation of the case of “ The King against Belringer,” which it was conceived put an end to the body corporate. On the day after charter-day, however, he attended at the Guildhall, where all the eleven members of the common council were present. No act was done, or attempted to be done, but the election of a mayor, when sir Thomas Gunston was chosen by a majority of six to five, he voting for himself.

“ On the printed report of the case of “ The King against Belringer”<sup>1</sup> coming out, Dr. Cabbell sent a case to London, with queries as to the existence of the body corporate, as to his acting as a magistrate, and as to his swearing in sir Thomas Gunston. In answer he was advised that the corporation was at an end, at least so as there could be no election of a mayor, he was no longer to act as such, and not to swear in sir Thomas Gunston.

<sup>1</sup> See 4th Term Reports, by Darnford and East, p. 810.

“ At the time he refused so to do, he was not asked the reason of his refusal, nor at any time afterwards, but he sent the notice to sir Thomas Gunston, as before-mentioned.”

‘ The grounds on which sir Thomas Gunston appeared to rely, in support of the mandamus, were,

“ First, That the common council is not constituted as in the Bodmin case of “ The King against Belringer—the words in the Taunton charter,—*Qui quidem aldermanni, capitales burgenses, &c. pro tempore existentes,*” admitting the construction—that any number, however reduced, of the capital and inferior burgesses are the common council for the time being.

“ Secondly, That though this may not be the construction, yet as the mayor was absent on the charter-day, when burgesses might have been chosen, to fill up the number of thirteen or more, who might then have proceeded to the election of a mayor, and as it may be contended this could not be done on the statute-day, that the number eleven assembled on that day were sufficient to elect a mayor, but the act 11th George I. cap. 4. sect. 1. empowers acts to be done on the statute-day as on the charter-day, in order to the election of a mayor, or other head officer; and the 5th section of the same act also provides that as great a number should be present and concur on the statute, as as well as on the charter day.”

‘ In consequence of the then recent determination of the case of the King against Belringer, which has been already alluded to, in which it was decided that there must be a majority of the members composing a corporation to form any elective assembly, and there

being at this time but eleven members of the corporation of Taunton existing out of the twenty-four, the rule for a mandamus was abandoned, and no recorder, mayor, or any other officer was afterwards chosen, and the corporation has ever since the year 1792, when Dr. Cabbell's (the last mayor's) functions ceased, been utterly extinct and dissolved.

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‘ In the year 1810, a large proportion of the inhabitants of Taunton wishing to see the corporation revived, a public meeting was held on the 20th of December, in that year, for the purpose of considering “the expediency and means of obtaining a renewal of the charter of incorporation;” at which meeting the question of expediency being carried in the affirmative, the following resolutions, which briefly explain the steps that led to the dissolution of the late corporate body, and the reasons for the proposed revival and renewal thereof, were agreed to and adopted :—

“ That the inhabitants of this town and its precincts, extending over the parishes of St. Mary Magdalen and Taunton St. James, were, by a royal charter, granted in the 29th year of the reign of king Charles the second, incorporated into one body, politic and corporate, by the name of “mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the borough and town of Taunton, in the county of Somerset,” such body consisting of fourteen capital, and ten inferior burgesses, the vacancies occurring in that body to be supplied by election of new members, in the manner prescribed in the charter, which mayor and aldermen, for the time being, and

the former for one year after the expiration of his mayoralty, were, by the said charter, invested with the full powers of justices of the peace, within the said parishes, and possessed a franchise of holding quarter-sessions of the peace for the town; and were, generally, by means of the said charter, the resident guardians and protectors of the property, peace, and police of the town.

“That there was a power reserved by the said charter, to the crown, to appoint, from time to time, by special commission, six justices of the peace of the county, to act as justices of the peace, within the said town and precincts, in like manner as the local magistrates; which six justices have been commonly called adjunct justices.

“That such body having decreased in its members, for want of timely elections, below a majority of the whole number originally incorporated, it became in law dissolved or divested of its functions.

“That such decrease gradually took place, without the knowledge of the existing members of the body of the legal consequences of such neglect.

“That this populous town is indebted for the administration of justice to the occasional, and as it may be, casual aid of county magistrates; and that such a magistracy, from its want of locality and superintending eye, is not so adequate to the police and internal order of the town, as a bench of resident magistrates, organised exclusively for the attainment of these desirable objects.

“That this town may, by the death, change of residence, or declining to act of the neighbouring



county magistrates, or by a reluctance to public situation in any men who might be looked to as the successors of the now acting magistrates, be placed in the possible predicament of having no bench at all; or, of being so far from justice, as to be in a state of comparative prohibition to its benefits—an evil against which it is the duty of the town to endeavour to indemnify itself.

“That Taunton is a populous town, and destitute of effectual police.

“That the renewal of the charter would create a resident bench of four magistrates, and thus secure to the town the certainty, at all times, of a ready access to, and prompt administration of justice, and a regular police.

“That this town is in a state of growing improvement and extending population, and that in proportion to such advances, its claim to a resident magistracy is increased and strengthened.

“That the office and important duties of clerk of the market, also cognizance of weights and measures, and the assize of bread, would by a renewal of the charter, devolve on the mayor for the time being, who would be thus, in a particular manner called upon, judicially in his own person, and ministerially by the vigilance of his officers, to enforce a due observance of the law in these respects—objects important to all, especially to the poorer classes of the town.

“That the renewal of the said charter is fraught with the preceding and many other local advantages; and that it would tend to the increased provincial and general importance of the town.

“ That a petition be prepared for the signature of the inhabitants, and be, with all convenient despatch, presented to his majesty in council, humbly praying, that he will be graciously pleased to renew the charter of incorporation of this town, with such powers, franchises, immunities, rights, and privileges as to his majesty shall seem meet and expedient: but that it be humbly submitted to his majesty, if he shall deem the said petition of his loyal subjects, the said inhabitants, worthy of his royal favour, graciously to condescend and consent to the omission in the new charter of the provision creating the adjunct justices, and to the substitution of a clause precluding the intervention in the jurisdiction of the local magistrates, of any other control than that of the ordinary visitation of his majesty in his honourable court of King’s Bench, and to grant, if he shall see fit, by such new charter, a franchise of holding plea of debt in the mayor’s court, in causes of action arising within the aforesaid parishes, to the amount of twenty pounds in each cause, and also to enlarge the capacity of the new body of taking lands and goods by devise, bequest, grant, or purchase, from the clear annual value of three hundred pounds, as limited by the former charter, to the clear annual value of one thousand pounds.

“ That the newly to be incorporated body should consist of fourteen capital burgesses, from whom the mayor and two aldermen for the time being, shall be chosen, and ten inferior burgesses to be selected from the substantial inhabitants and householders, now resident within the said parishes, or either of them; that the names of the first twenty-four persons desirous of

becoming members of such body, and subscribing the sum of fifty pounds apiece, shall be submitted to the approbation of his majesty's privy council, and all due means taken to procure the incorporation of such twenty-four persons, of whom fourteen persons shall be proposed and marshalled by seniority of age, to be the first and modern capital burgesses, and the remaining ten shall be proposed for the first and modern inferior burgesses, and be also marshalled by seniority of age. But if more than twenty-four persons shall offer a subscription of fifty pounds each, with a view to become members of the new body, then the number of twenty-four shall be composed of the twenty-four seniors of the whole number of such subscribers having been resident within the limits of the aforesaid parishes for seven years, the supernumerary subscriptions to be returned to the subscribers, or applied to the permanent fund, as they desire.

“ That a committee of twelve gentlemen be now appointed, and that any five or more of them be a quorum, and that such committee or quorum shall have power to call general meetings, and to hold committee meetings, to prepare and procure signatures to the necessary petitions, to direct the expenditure of the subscriptions, and any part of the donations, if necessary, to the proposed object, to do all other acts, and pursue such means as such committee or quorum shall think essential to the furtherance and attainment of the object of this meeting.

“ That Mr. Henry James Leigh be appointed secretary and treasurer, and be attendant on the general and committee meetings.

"That the office of recorder, if the town be re-incorporated, shall be offered, so far as this meeting can offer it, to the lord lieutenant of the county, earl Poulett."

'A petition was accordingly drawn up, embodying the preceding resolutions, and presented to his majesty in council, which was referred to the law officers of the crown, to report their opinion on the propriety of renewing the charter. But before the report was ready, a numerous body of the inhabitants of Taunton, who were hostile to the proposed revival of the corporate body, presented a counter-petition to the king in council, praying that his majesty would graciously be pleased not to grant a new charter of incorporation to the town.

'These petitions were at length referred by the privy council to the attorney and solicitor-general, to hear evidence and report their opinion upon the merits of the case. At the first hearing, which took place before the attorney-general, sir William Garrow, in 1813, that officer having declared that he should not report that a new charter was necessary, on the ground taken by the petitioners, the latter were induced, for reasons that occurred in the hearing before the attorney-general, to present a new petition, upon a different ground.

'A new petition was accordingly presented to the Prince Regent, signed by eight hundred and four inhabitants, which was met by a counter-petition, signed by five hundred and sixty-four inhabitants. These petitions being also referred to the legal advisers of the crown, those officers were attended, on the 21st of May, 1814, by the counsel, agents, and witnesses

of the petitioners, and counter-petitioners. The law officers shortly after made their report, in which they recognized the existence of the inconveniences complained of in the want of a resident magistracy, and represented their inability of accurately judging whether the arrangements for a regular attendance of the magistrates of the county, under a new commission, would effectually remove the evils complained of, and render a new charter unnecessary. They also recommended certain provisions to be inserted in the new charter, if his royal highness should think fit to grant one. The report being considered on the whole rather favourable to the prayer of the petitioners, and the latter requiring to be heard by counsel, before the privy-council, a day was at length fixed on for that purpose, and on the 29th of April, 1815, the petitioners by their counsel, Henry Tripp, esq. and the counter-petitioners, by their counsel, James Burrough, esq. were heard at length before the privy-council, when the latter came to the determination, which was shortly after communicated to the agents concerned, that they did not think it expedient to advise his royal highness to grant a new charter to the town of Taunton.

‘ The police of the town was thus left to the superintendence of the county magistrates, and a new commission of the peace being shortly after issued, the names of several gentlemen of Taunton, and the immediate vicinity, were inserted therein, who soon afterwards qualified themselves to act as justices of the peace for the county of Somerset, and the bench of Taunton is now filled with a highly respectable and active magistracy, who administer the laws with

promptness of decision and with an honourable and conscientious rectitude, which proves of great advantage to the town and neighbourhood.

#### BOROUGH OF TAUNTON.

Taunton, as far as the matter can be traced, was a borough-town as early as the common people became privileged with a representation. It sends two members to parliament. The powers of election are subject to the following restrictions. This right is limited to the borough, the bounds of which, as to the right of election, so far from co-extending with those of the town, do not coincide even with those of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, which lies within the town.<sup>1</sup> The right is farther confined to the parishioners of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, who have been inhabitants for six months, and not paupers, nor receiving any share of the alms distributed from the funds of the respective charities left to the town. These restrictions excepted, the right of voting is the privilege of all the inhabitants, who dress their own victuals in their own

<sup>1</sup> In the early history of the house of commons, the members were paid wages for their attendance in parliament, knights of shires receiving four shillings a day, and citizens and burgesses two shillings a day, for as many days as the parliament continued. The regular clergy, to avoid this burden, would not allow their tenants to exercise the privilege of voting for representatives, and therefore it will be found in all cases where any house stands within the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, in Taunton, and is situated without the present limits of the borough, that the site of such house did anciently belong to the prior and convent of Augustine Canons in this town, and this is the reason why the boundaries of the parish and those of the borough do not coincide.

house or room, or keep a table to themselves. Hence they are generally called Pot-wallers.<sup>1</sup>

The constitution of this borough, as far as its operation extends, appears to be founded on just principles. For every one who is liable to be called upon to bear arms in defence of the state, and to contribute his direct quota towards the burdens of government, and who has personal rights to guard, (those valuable ones in particular of conscience and liberty,) is properly invested with a power to protect himself against the encroachments of authority, and the exactions of tyranny. Such popular constitutions of boroughs may have their inconveniences and evils; but the bribe cannot rise so high, nor the spirit of venality become so abandoned, as where the right of choosing members of parliament lies in fewer hands. The poorest inhabitant of a borough so constituted feels his importance in the political scale, and is able to hold up his head against the insolence of wealth and rank. Many of the lower class are known, on the trying occasion of a contested election, to act with a firmness and a regard to their word, when once pledged, which do them honour. The disposition to wish for and favour a contest is not peculiar to popular boroughs; and the evils of which a contest is ever productive are not to be imputed to a number of persons who

<sup>1</sup> Pot-waller, Pot-walloner, Pot-walloper, signifies one that boils his own pot, and dresses his own victuals. Each of these terms is derived from *wealan*, Saxon, to boil; but Pot-waller seems to be most proper. It is observable that *wall*, and *walloper*, are provincial expressions of the like import at this day.—*Locke's MSS.* T.

have not, in themselves, either weight, or union, or skill in management, to effect one; but to those of higher station, whose resentment is fed, or whose love of power is gratified, or whose interest is advanced by it. The peculiar mischief of a contested election, in such a town as Taunton, arises from the habits of idleness and drunkenness, into which it draws a large proportion of the people.

The author must be permitted to add, that he shall think this history will answer a most important end, if he could by it convey into the minds of the rising generation, in the town of Taunton, a deep and full conviction, that a right to vote, in the election of the national representatives, is a *trust of the greatest value*, and of the most serious influence on the welfare of his country; a *trust* for the public good, not to be disposed of merely to serve or oblige those who wish to advance themselves in the community, as a matter of favour to them; but to be employed in the support of men of ability, or at least of honest minds and disinterested virtue, though they possess not shining talents; in support of those, who, from their known principles and character, it may be hoped, will approve themselves faithful guardians of the national welfare; the consistent and firm friends of civil and religious liberty; in a word, a *trust*, to be used not merely to meet the wishes of a candidate, but to serve our country.

It cannot be foreseen what consequences may be connected with the return of *one single gentleman* to parliament; or with the application of *one single vote* in a borough. So totally improper, so exceedingly mischievous is the language often held out, "What



signifies one vote?" Every man should feel it to be of the *greatest importance to himself*, and to the discharge of his own duty, to act upon the principles of virtue and rectitude. In the senate, on *one vote* may depend the salvation of the kingdom. *One vote decided the Hanover succession.*<sup>1</sup>

' It has been already noticed in the description of Taunton, as given in Domesday-book, that at the time of the Norman conquest, "there were in this town, sixty-four burgesses, living under the protection of the bishop of Winchester."

' These burgesses were persons engaged in some sort of manufacture and trade, or were artificers, who

' Another striking example of the importance of a single vote is furnished by Mr. Whiston. "In the year 1685, there was so extraordinary a crisis of the protestant religion, as well deserves to be mentioned here; inasmuch that, bishop Burnet partly implies, but Mr. Arthur Onslow more distinctly informs me, it once depended on a *single vote* in the house of commons, whether king James should be permitted to employ popish officers in his army or not; which point, had he gained, there was visibly an end of the public establishment of the protestant religion in this kingdom. It came, as I said, to a single vote; and a courtier, who was to watch every voter where the member had any employment under the king, observed one that had a regiment, going to vote against the court; and seeing him, put him warmly in mind of his regiment. He made answer; "My brother died last night, and has left me £700. a year;" which *single vote* gained a majority, and saved the protestant religion at this time. If I might use an heathen expression in a case belonging to christianity, I would say, *Non hoc sine numine divum.*"  
—Whiston's Memoirs, second edit. p. 19.

To these instances it may be added, that towards the close of the late American war, several very important *constitutional* motions in the house of commons, were negatived and lost by a *single vote*.

carried on their respective businesses, and sold their goods, under the bishop of Winchester's protection, for which, each of them paid him six-pence yearly. The protection here mentioned to be afforded to the burgesses of Taunton, was the same in all the boroughs of England at that period, and is the origin of what was afterwards, and still is, called *tenure in burgage*. Whilst the inhabitants of towns rendered to the lord *uncertain* rents, and performed *uncertain* duties and services, they were in a state of villanage; but when they had obtained favour of the lord, so as to live under a rent *certain*, they then became tenants in free burgage, and the town a free borough. And afterwards when burgesses were summoned to parliament, such free borough sent burgesses to the great council of the nation, as an ancient free borough before time of memory. This is the borough by prescription, without any charter of incorporation, and it will always be found wherever the lord of the manor, portreeves, headborough, constables or bailiffs, make the return to the sheriff, that the return, so made, is a certain indication of an ancient free borough by prescription.\*

\* The first time that Taunton sent members to parliament, was in the year 1295, the 23d of king Edward the first. In that year, the king summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, and writs were accordingly sent to the sheriffs of the several counties of England, to cause to be elected two knights for each county, two citizens for each city, and two burgesses for each borough, to be at the same parliament, on the

\* Gardon's Hist. of Parliament, vol. i. p. 223.—Brady's Hist. of Boroughs, p. 75.

day appointed, provided with full and sufficient powers from the community of such county, city, or borough, to consent and agree, in the name of the said community, to such things as the king and his council should require of them, and the earls, barons, and peers of the realm should ordain. From this time is to be dated the first regular general summons of knights, citizens, and burgesses to parliament.\*

\* The first returns now extant of knights, citizens, and burgesses, to serve in parliament, are of the 26th year of king Edward the first, 1297. At that period the sheriffs of the several counties made the return to

\* The expenses attending the multiplied wars of Edward I. joined to alterations which had insensibly and progressively taken place at home, obliged him to have frequent recourse to the great council of the nation, and afterwards to his parliaments, for the necessary supplies, which the ancient mode of raising money had rendered requisite, and therefore that part of the people who were more immediately engaged in trade and manufactures were now introduced into the public councils, and laid the foundation of great and important changes in the government.

In this, his first parliament, the king met with great opposition on the part of the clergy: he demanded as a subsidy the fifth part of their moveables, which they absolutely refused, and it was not until a second meeting, on their persisting in this refusal, that he was willing to accept of a tenth, which they granted.—The earls, barons, and knights of the several counties, sat, treated, and conferred together, and they gave the king an eleventh part of all their moveable goods.—The citizens and burgesses sat and acted separately, and granted a seventh part of all their moveables. There were no laws made, or other business transacted, in this parliament.

In this parliament, of which the citizens and burgesses first formed a part, it may be observed, that the writ directed that they should have a power to act separately from the knights of counties, and do what by common council should be ordained.

the writ, as well for the cities and boroughs, as for the county. The citizens, or burgesses, or the select body of each city or borough, notified the names of the persons elected to the sheriff, who returned all the knights, citizens, and burgesses elected in his county, sometimes by indenture, and sometimes by way of schedule, annexed to the writ; and among other returns in this manner, we find some for Taunton. There is not found any returning officer for this borough until the 12th of Edward the fourth, when the return was made by the bishop of Winchester's chief officer for the liberty of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, namely, the bailiff appointed by patent, who is the first returning officer on record for this borough.

‘ In the 11th of Henry the fourth, the return of the sheriff of the county of Somerset is yet preserved in the Tower of London, but from age it is in a mutilated state and much defaced; there is, however, enough left to shew that this return is by indenture between the sheriff and the different burgesses, and that Thomas Edward and Thomas Barat were in that year elected burgesses for the borough of Taunton. The return in the first of Henry the fifth is by the sheriff, by schedule annexed to the writ, in which he names the manucaptors or sureties of the burgesses who were then elected for their appearance in parliament.

‘ It was not unusual in the first period of the parliaments of this kingdom, for the members for the cities and boroughs to be elected in the county court on the same day with the knights of the shire, and jointly returned by the sheriff in one indenture, especially before the act of the 28d of Henry the 6th, and in some instances

after that. That this was the case can be proved by the returns yet extant. There were commonly sent to the county-court, four or five citizens or burgesses from the respective cities and boroughs, of whom the mayor or chief magistrate was usually one, who by the assent of the whole community of the city or borough, from which they were sent, did choose citizens and burgesses, to represent them in parliament, and then gave them full and sufficient power for themselves, and the community of such cities and boroughs, to do and consent to such things in parliament, as by common council should be ordained. An example of this mode of return for the cities and boroughs in the county of Somerset, occurs in the 2d year of king Henry the fifth, and is as follows :—

“ This indenture made at Ivelchester, on Monday the 12th day of November, in the second year of the reign of king Henry the fifth, after the conquest, between Walter Hungerford, knt. sheriff of the county of Somerset, in full county assembled, on the one part, and Ralph Hunt, mayor of the city of Bath, John Skittish, John Savage, and John Haygoby, citizens of the said city, who by the assent of the whole community of the said city, have elected Richard Wydecombe and William Radestoke, two citizens for the community of the said city, to be at the parliament of our lord the king, to be holden at Westminster on Monday next after the octave of St. Martin, then next coming, according to the form of the writ to the same sheriff directed :—

“ And John Herewoode, John Russel, Walter Dyere, and Luke Wilton, burgesses of the borough

of Wells, who in form aforesaid, have elected Thomas Dynt and John Hindon, two burgesses of the said borough, to be at the same time and place for the community of the borough aforesaid, according to the form of the said writ :—

“ And John Ward, William Goffe, Richard Ward, and Thomas Cave, burgesses of the borough of Bridgewater, who in form aforesaid, have elected William Gascoigne and John Redwelly, two burgesses of the borough aforesaid, according to the form of the said writ :—

“ And Thomas Wiger, Walter Portman, Edmund Tailleir, and John Northmore, burgesses of the borough of Taunton, who in form aforesaid, have elected John Merchant and Edmund Dyere, two burgesses of the said borough, to be at the same time and place for the community of the borough aforesaid, according to the form of the said writ :—

“ Giving and granting to the said citizens and burgesses full and sufficient powers for themselves and the community of the said city and boroughs, to do and consent to such things as shall then and there by common council be ordained. In testimony whereof, &c.”<sup>1</sup>

‘ If I do not mistake, the election of burgesses for Taunton was also made in the county court, in the 9th of Henry the fifth. The return of that year for this borough, is by indenture of the sheriff, and also includes the return for the city of Bath. It is as follows :—

“ This indenture made at Yvelchester, on Monday the 3d day of November, in the ninth year of king

<sup>1</sup> Brady's Hist. of Cities and Boroughs, appx. p. 20, No. 14.

Henry the fifth, (1420) between John Newburgh, sheriff of Somerset, of the one part, and Radlin Hunt, mayor of the city of Bath, and other citizens of the city aforesaid, who have chosen Walter Riche and Robert Newlyn, two citizens for the commons of the city aforesaid, to appear at the parliament to be holden at Westminster the 1st day of December next following.

“And between the sheriff aforesaid, and Robert Crock, William Payne, Ralph Sarger, and Thomas Osborne, burgesses of the borough of Taunton, who have chosen John Bowen and Walter Portman two burgesses of the borough aforesaid, to appear at the parliament above named. In witness whereof as well the aforesaid sheriff as the mayor, *citizens, and burgesses* aforesaid, to these present indentures alternately *have put their seals*, the day, place, and year above named.”

‘ Thus the sheriff of the county appears to have been the returning officer ; and the burgesses, being the electors, joined in the indenture to shew their assent. At this period the sheriffs of counties did not make out any precept to the mayor or bailiffs of cities and boroughs, and of course no particular officer was called on to make the return.’

‘ The commons were for a long time so far from being considered as an essential branch of the legislature, that we find in the reigns of the three first Edwards, and even to the reign of Edward the fourth, that they were not constantly and regularly summoned as a distinct order, the sheriffs omitting them at pleasure, and the king sometimes in the writ of summons expressly naming the representatives which the sheriffs were to return ; (See Cl. R. 45 Edw. III. m. 2. dors.) and from the indefinite and general words of the writ directed to the sheriff of each county, “ To cause to be chosen two citizens of every city, and two burgesses of every

‘It was in consequence of the act of the 23d of Henry the sixth, chapter 14, that the sheriffs first made out their precepts; and the mayor or bailiff of the town was called on to act as the returning officer; and it is borough,” it was left to the sheriff to name and direct which were boroughs, and which were not. This will be best illustrated by an example or two from a neighbouring county.

In the 26th of Edward I. in the return by the sheriff of Wiltshire, annexed to the writ, he returned two knights for the county, two citizens for New Sarum, two burgesses for Downton, two for Devizes, two for Chippenham, and two for Malmesbury, with their manucaptors or sureties for their appearance in parliament; and in his return, he further says, that, “the writ was sent to the constable of the castle of Marlborough, (because it could not be executed by the sheriff in that liberty) and to the bailiffs of the liberty of Calne and Worth, who each of them returned no answer.”

Here it is apparent that the sheriff of Wiltshire sent only to one city and six boroughs in that county; but three years previously to this, Old Sarum, Bedwin, Cricklade, Ludgershall, and Wilton, all in the same county, had been summoned, and returned members to the first parliament of king Edward the first.

In the returns of knights, citizens, and burgesses to serve for the same county, in the 12th year of Edward III. in a parliament holden at York, the execution of the writ was in a schedule annexed to it. After the return of the knights for the county, the sheriff returns two citizens for New Sarum, two burgesses for Wilton, and two for Downton, with their manucaptors or sureties. “And for two burgesses for Marlborough,” the sheriff says, “he sent the writ to the constable of the castle of Marlborough, for the reason above given, but that he received no answer”—and immediately concludes, “*there were no more cities or boroughs within his bailiwick.*”

The reader will here observe that the sheriff sent only to one city and three boroughs, although the boroughs of Old Sarum, Bedwin, Calne, Chippenham, Cricklade, Devizes, Ludgershall, and Malmesbury, had elected and returned members to parliament before this time.—*Brady's Hist. of Boroughs*, p. 52.



manifest from the act, that in every borough (where no mayor presided) the bailiff was the proper officer to whom alone the precept could be directed, and who was to make the return, and no one else could legally assume the duties of returning officer.

In the 7th of Edward the fourth, 1466, there is no indenture extant for Taunton, but in the schedule of the names returned for the county of Somerset, it runs thus: "The manucaptors of William Danvers and Robert Ashetill, two burgesses chosen for the said borough of Taunton, are Richard Bunton and Thomas Wareyn.

The next return is in the 12th of Edward the fourth, 1471, and for the first time shews the character of the returning officer for this borough. It is in these words:—

"By this indenture, William Bodell, bailiff of the town and borough of Taunton, delivered to John Cheverell, sheriff of Somerset, the names of the burgesses of the same town and borough, chosen for the parliament to be holden at Westminster, the 6th day of October next following, as in the king's writ to the said sheriff, dated the 18th day of September, in the 12th year of Edward the fourth, is directed.

"Burgesses elected, Edward Aysheton, William Danvers.

"The electors of the burgesses above-named are John Best, John Wyse, Thomas Wareyn, and others.

"In witness whereof, to these indentures, as well the *bailiff* aforesaid, as the said sheriff, have alternately put the seals of their offices. Dated at Taunton the 22d day of September, the year aforesaid."

‘The next return that is found is in the 17th of Edward the fourth, and that is the latest return for this borough to be found in the Tower. From that period to the Reformation, not a single return is to be discovered, either there or in any other place.

‘This return is as follows :—

“This indenture made between William Berkeley, sheriff of Somerset, of the one part, and the bailiffs of the borough of Taunton, and John Grobham, John Wynne, James Boys, and John Sarger, burgesses of the same borough, of the other part, witnesseth, that the same *bailiffs* and *burgesses* have chosen Edward Astton and Robert Lovelord, burgesses of the said borough, to be present at the parliament to be holden at Westminster, on the 16th day of January next, &c. In witness whereof, as well the seal of the sheriff aforesaid, as the seals of the bailiffs and burgesses aforesaid, alternately are put, &c.”

‘That these bailiffs were the head officers of the town there can be no doubt, and as the bishop of Winchester was lord of the manor, he has the right to appoint the bailiff; but it does not appear that he exercised the right of nominating that officer until the following year, when for the first time he appointed the said William Bodell, who was the bailiff of the town before he was the steward and bailiff of the whole lordship and town; and the bishops of Winchester have continued to exercise the right of appointment from that time to the present.

‘The next returns which can be found for this borough were made by the bailiff appointed under letters patent, by the bishop of Winchester; and

the future returns were all made by this officer, with the interruption of about thirty years, until the town obtained a charter, from which period the mayor became the returning officer, under the act of the 23d of Henry the 6th.

‘ The first return to be found after the Reformation is in the first year of queen Mary, 1553, and is as follows:—

“ This indenture, made the 22d daye of Septemb’ in the fyrste year of the reigne of our most drede sovereign Ladye, Mary, by the grace of GOD, of England, France, and Ireland, Quene, defender of the faythe, and in earthe, of the Church of England and also of Ireland the supreme head, Betwyxte John Rogers, Knyghte of Shyre of the county of Som’ of thone partye, and the bailiff and other inhabytants of the burrough of Taunton aforesaid, of the other partye, wytnesseth, that the said bayliff, with the expresse assent, consent, and agreement of all the then habytants and burges of the said burrough of Taunton, in the county aforesaid, have nomynated, appointed, elected, and chosen, and by these our presents doe nomynate, electe, appoint, and chuse, James Basset and Jacques Wyngfyeld, esquires, burgesses of and for the said burrough, to attend the quene’s majesty most high court of parlyament next to be holden, which shall begyn at Westminster, the vth daye of October next coming, then and there to doe those things to the uttermost of theyr power, which to the said parlyament shall ap’taign and belonge. In witness whereof to theyse said indentures we have set the *common seal* of the said burrough of Taunton. Yeven the daye and year abovesayd.”

• The next return is made in the first and second of Philip and Mary, 1554, by Walter Halse, the bailiff appointed under letters patent of the bishop of Winchester, and confirmed by the dean and chapter of the same, and is as follows:—

“ This indenture, made at the boro’ of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, the 28th day of October, in the 1st and 2d years of the reign of Philip and Mary, by the grace of GOD, king and queen of England, France, Naples, and Jerusalem, and Ireland, defenders of the faith, princes of Spain and Sicily, archdukes of Austria, dukes of Milan, Burgundy and Brabant, earls of Haspurge, Flanders, and Tyrol, bet’ sir John Tregonwell, knt. sheriff of the county aforesaid, of the one part, and Walter Halse, bailiff of the borough of Taunton, and the burgesses of the same burrough, in the aforesaid county, of the other part, witnesseth, that the aforesaid bailiff and burgesses, by virtue of a precept of the sheriff of the county aforesaid, to them directed, have elected for the borough aforesaid, two burgesses, that is to say, Thomas Eden and John Norrys, esqrs. who have full power for the boro’ aforesaid, to do and consent to those things which at the parliament of the said king and queen at Westminster, the 12th day of November next, shall be then and there to them enjoined. In witness whereof, as well the aforesaid sheriff, the seal of his office, as the aforesaid bailiff and burgesses, their common seal, have interchangeably put to these indentures, the day and year aforesaid.”

• And in the 4th and 5th of Philip and Mary, 1558, there is another return by the same Walter Halse,

the patent bailiff, and the burgesses, which return is in the following words :—

“ This indenture made the 16th day of January, in the 4th and 5th years of the reign of Philip and Mary, by the grace of GOD, of England, Spain, France, bothe the Sicilies, Jerusalem, and Ireland, king and queen, defenders of the faith, archdukes of Austria, dukes of Burgundy, Milan, and Brabant, earls of Haspurge, Flanders, and Tirol, between Walter Halse, bailiff of the boro’ of Taunton, and the burgesses there, of the one part, and Humphrey Colles, esq. sheriff of the county of Somerset, of the other part, witnesseth, that we the said bailiff and burgesses, with the unanimous consent and assent of us and of the whole commonalty of the boro’ aforesaid, have made, ordained, and in our place put Valentine Dale, Doctor of Laws, and Richard Myrfyelde, gent. for the parliament of the aforesaid lord and lady, king and queen, on the 20th day of January next ensuing, to be holden at Westminster, (GOD willing) giving to the aforesaid Valentine Dale and Richard Myrfyelde full power and authority, for us and in our name, to consent to those things which in the aforesaid parliament shall happen to be ordained. In witness whereof we have put our seal to these presents. Dated at Taunton aforesaid, the day and year aforesaid.”

‘ It has already been observed, that from the 12th of Edward the fourth, to the 14th of Elizabeth, the bailiff appointed under letters patent by the bishop of Winchester, either in his character of bailiff, or by his name, made the returns either separately or with the burgesses; but during the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, it

seems, from some cause unexplained, *there was a non-user by the patent bailiff* of his office of returning officer, and the common constables, (chosen in the bishop's court-leet,) with the burgesses, exercised the right of returning the members for the borough, and from the 14th of Elizabeth, to the 30th of her reign, made four returns.

'In the first year of king Charles the first, the constables were joined in making the return by the bailiffs of the borough, chosen also in the bishop's court-leet; the bailiffs signing after the constables.

'In the second year of Charles the first, 1627, the town obtained a charter of incorporation, which, although it did not interfere with the right of election, nor with the returning officer, changed however the constitution of the town and borough, and invested the civil power in the hands of a mayor, justice, aldermen, and burgesses. In 1660 the town lost this charter, but in the year 1677, the inhabitants obtained a new one, as has been already mentioned, which expressly confirmed to the bishop of Winchester, and his successors, all the privileges, pre-eminences, and emoluments enjoyed by any of his predecessors.

'From the grant of the first charter in 1627, until the year 1792, the mayor, as chief magistrate of the borough, acted as returning officer, sometimes making the return jointly with the burgesses, and at other times under the seal of the corporation; but in the latter year, the corporate body having become less in number than the majority of the mayor and capital and inferior burgesses together, the charter became nullified, and the corporation virtually dissolved.

‘ At the next general election, however, in 1796, sir Thomas Gunston, the person who had been elected mayor on the expiration of the mayoralty of Dr. Cabbell, in 1792, and who considered himself the mayor *de facto*, made the return, but Mr. Moreland, then one of the members, doubting his right, had another return made by the constables and bailiffs, chosen in the court-leet.

Since the election of 1796, there was a single one in 1800, on the death of sir Benjamin Hammet, when his son Mr. John Hammet, being the only candidate, and the old mayor (*de facto*) being dead, he was returned by the constables and bailiffs.

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Previous to the revolution, Charles II. and James II. made every effort to extend and establish that prerogative, in the abuse of which their royal father had lost his life. After the settlement of the prince of Orange on the throne, and the accession of the house of Hanover, very vigorous struggles were made by the friends of the Stuarts, to bring in the supposed representative of that family. These oppositions of course extended themselves to the boroughs; and the seasons of election were the opportunities which each side warmly endeavoured to improve, to the advancement of their own views and interests, by setting up and supporting, as candidates, gentlemen of very different sentiments and attachments. With these political and public objects, personal prejudices, partialities, and interests are often blended, to foment contests and heighten animosities. Some of the more interesting of these oppositions and circumstances of importance connected with the returns

at other times, it may be expected, should undergo a review in a history of the town.

The gentlemen elected to represent this borough in the parliament called immediately after the restoration were Thomas Gorges and William Wyndham, esqrs. who owed their seats to the management and influence of the crown. The long sitting of the pensionary parliament of 1661, while it tended to rivet on the people the chains of slavery, precluded the efforts of a contested election. The vigorous and distinguishing part taken in the election of 1681, by Mr. John Hucker, a serge-maker, eventually drew upon him the severest effects of royal indignation. He was a captain of foot in the duke of Monmouth's army, and was taken prisoner in the day of battle. Great intercession was made for his life; but his having been a principal person in the management of elections was a bar to his pardon. In a letter to a friend, a little before his execution, he left this manly and proper vindication of himself in this respect. "As to elections of members of parliament, I judge it my birth-right, and therefore was industrious in it; but I hope never did (I am sure never intended) troublesomeness to any in it, but especially to my superiors. I had ever a venerable and due esteem of magistrates, as the ministers of GOD, and they administering an ordinance of GOD."

The illegal and cruel proceedings of judge Jeffreys and of colonel Kirke naturally filled the country with terror, and made it easy for the court to carry two members favourable to their views. But in 1690, being the first parliament of king William, two gentlemen were elected, attached to the principles of the



revolution ; namely, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Speke. This Mr. Speke had escaped from the kingdom, and spent his time in travel, till the revolution ; a proclamation having been issued against him, in the proceedings against the adherents to the duke of Monmouth. His family suffered heavily for that cause.

Mr. Clarke was the gentleman at whose desire the great Mr. Locke wrote, and to whom he dedicated, his excellent treatise on education. The dedication concludes with a testimony to the character of Mr. Clarke, which will reflect lasting honour on his memory. "My affection to you," says Mr. Locke, speaking of his tract, "gave the first rise to it, and I am pleased that I can leave to posterity this mark of the friendship that has been betwixt us. For I know no greater pleasure in this life, nor a better remembrance to be left behind one, than a long continued friendship with an *honest, useful, and worthy man, and lover of his country*. 7th March, 1692." It does credit to the town of Taunton, that such a man was its representative in seven parliaments ; and it is a presumption, that, during that period, a great number of the electors paid a just regard to the moral and political conduct of their member, and were influenced by truly patriotic principles. He did not, indeed, regain his seat without opposition. In the election of 1695, there was a third candidate, Mr. Portman ; and in 1698, four gentlemen offered themselves to represent the borough ; the two who had been sitting members in the preceding parliament, and Henry Seymour Portman, esq. and Francis Hobart, esq.

*General Election, 1714.*

The dissolution of parliament, by the death of queen Anne, and the accession of George I. to the throne, brought on, at Taunton, and in many places, a violent contest, between the parties into which the kingdom was then divided. The members returned by the mayor, as duly elected for this borough, were sir Francis Warre, bart. and Henry Portman, esq. The number of votes for the former gentleman was stated to be 637, and for the latter 636. The other candidates were William Pynsent and James Smith, esqrs. and the votes for each of them were reckoned at 381.

William Pynsent and James Smith, esqrs. and their friends, were greatly dissatisfied with the conduct of the mayor, and petitioned against his return. The petitions of the candidates, and of the inhabitants attached to their interest, severally set forth, in general, the partiality of the returning officer, in refusing the votes of several persons who had a right to vote, and offered the same for the petitioners, and in admitting others to vote for sir Francis Warre and Mr. Portman, who had no right so to do : and that other corrupt, undue, and unwarrantable practices were made use of by sir Francis Warre and Mr. Portman, and their agents, before, at, and after the election, to the great wrong and injury of the petitioners.

The petition of the inhabitants particularly represented, that, by the illegal conduct of the mayor, the poll of the borough, which usually in time past had consisted of about six hundred, now amounted to above one thousand ; and that he refused to grant a scrutiny on the poll, though demanded by Mr. Pynsent

and Mr. Smith, and frequently desired by several of the petitioners.

The counsel's brief formed on these petitions proceeded on the ancient constitution of the borough, particularized the illegal practices complained of, and classed, as well as ascertained, the number of votes, which the petitioners proposed to disqualify.

With regard to the constitution of the borough it was pleaded, that the borough of Taunton was a borough by prescription, consisting of six tythings, namely, East-street, Fore-street, North-street, High-street, Paul's-street, and Shuttern ; containing about three hundred distinct houses and no more; and had sent two members to parliament from time immemorial; and that the portreeves, before the town was incorporated by king Charles the first, were the returning officers.

That since that charter, and the charter of king Charles II. (neither of which charters meddle with the right of election,) the mayors had returned the precept ; which power of returning the petitioners did not controvert ; and that by those charters the corporation was extended through the two whole parishes of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalen and Taunton Saint James, which are large parishes ; so that the corporation is very much larger than the borough.

That the right of election is in the inhabitants, potwallers, of the said borough, not receiving alms nor living in alms-houses, whether settled parishioners or not ; or whether they had certificates from other parishes or not : and the right of election had always stood upon this footing, till the year 1700, when the

inhabitants, under discharges or certificates, were first denied to vote, on one side; while, on the other side, inhabitants, under the same predicament, were received to vote, their discharges being suppressed or refused to be produced.<sup>1</sup>

The particular allegations of unwarrantable practices, set forth in the petition, were,

1st. That now, and at former elections, many foreigners had been encouraged to come into the borough a short time before the election, leaving their families and goods in other parishes; that ten or twenty of this description had been in a house, where there had not been above two or three chimneys, and had polled, and as soon as the elections were over, went away again.

2d. That previously to the election, a number of poor men had been struck out of the parish pay-roll, and maintained, by the bye, till the election was over, and then entered in the pay-roll again.

3d. That licences had been taken away from inn-keepers and ale-house-keepers on account of their votes; that four pounds a piece had been paid for them again; and some were not yet restored to them.

4th. That some had been raised and others abated in their rates, on account of their votes.

5th. That some had been threatened to be starved, in case their necessities should oblige them to apply for parish aid; and others had been denied relief on casual wants.

<sup>1</sup> This was a contest between sir Francis Warre and Mr. Baker, on Mr. Portman, who had been chosen both for Taunton and Wells, choosing to stand for the latter place.

6th. That several, after the election, had been rewarded for their votes, by parish pay.

7th. That out of the same house, one vote had been refused, on the plea that the house was not in the borough; and yet another admitted.

8th. That many had been made freemen gratis, in order to multiply votes.

9th. That, for the same purpose, strangers had been taken in, and made parishioners, and the parish damaged thereby.

10th. That poor men had been rated, to increase the number of scot and lot men, on one side; and others, on the other side, had been struck out.

11th. That at the time of the election, the mayor would not give the agents of the petitioners time to make objections.

The petition further alleged, that though above one thousand were admitted to poll at this election, yet, on a narrow scrutiny made into the whole parish by the surveyors of the highways, there were not one thousand housekeepers in the whole parish; nor full seven hundred within the borough.

The petitioners proposed to disqualify voters for the gentlemen returned as members,

1.	Of Minors and apprentices,	36
2.	Alms-men, - - - -	30
3.	Out-livers, - - - -	188
4.	Not housekeepers, - -	167
5.	Charity-men, - - - -	129
Total, - - - -		500*

\* From the petitions and the counsel's brief, communicated by Mr. Norris.

The house received the preceding petitions, and proceeded to the hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton, on Thursday, July 28th, 1715. The petitions were read, and counsel on both sides were heard, and witnesses were examined, concerning the right of election. After the counsel withdrew,

*It was resolved*, That the right of election of burghesses, to serve in parliament for the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, is in the *inhabitants* within the said borough, being *potwallers*, and not receiving *alms* or *charity*.<sup>2</sup>

The further hearing of the merits of the election was then adjourned until Saturday morning next.

On Thursday, August 11th, the house proceeded; when the petitioners' counsel insisted upon the disqualifying several persons who voted for the sitting members, on account of their having received the charities, called the *Town Charity*, which is vested in *feoffees*, and *Meredith's Charity*: and a book was produced, wherein was entered the account of the disposition of the *town charity*. The counsel for the sitting members objected to the said book being read as evidence. When the counsel, on both sides, had been heard, and were withdrawn,

*It was resolved*, That the account of *Jeffery Pysing*, steward and bailiff of the lands and tenements belonging to the town of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, from Dec. 21st, 1713, to Dec. 21st, 1714, (inserted in a book entitled, *Taunton; An Account-book of the Profits of the Town Lands*, 1683,) although not allowed

<sup>2</sup> These terms will be found precisely defined by the house, when we come to the petition of Popham and Halliday.

and signed by the feoffees, be admitted to be read as evidence.

The counsel were called in again, and Mr. Speaker acquainted them with the said resolution.

Then the petitioners' counsel proceeded to disqualify several persons named in the said account, as having received the said charity money; and also examined witnesses to prove persons having worn the cloaths given by Meredith's charity; and also to some persons coming into the borough by certificate; and also examined witnesses to prove, that several persons, who lived in the borough and were housekeepers and pot-waller<sup>s</sup>, offered to poll for the petitioners, but were refused; and also to some particular proceedings (as was insisted) of the mayor and Mr. Yard, (who was a justice of the peace for the borough:) after which the petitioners' counsel summed up their evidence, and the counsel were directed to withdraw.

The further hearing of the merits of the election was then adjourned till Saturday morning next.

Thursday, August 18, 1715, the house proceeded (according to order) to the further hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton, and the counsel on both sides were called in, and the sitting members' counsel examined several witnesses to justify several others of the voters, which the petitioners' counsel had objected against; and also insisted, that all such persons as were of that part of the parish of Saint Mary Magdalen Taunton, which lies within the borough, and come into the borough and boil a pot before the teste of the writ for electing members to serve in parliament, have a right to vote at such

elections, and examined several witnesses touching the same; and the petitioners' counsel examined witnesses in contradiction thereof; and the counsel on both sides were heard thereto, and then they withdrew.

And a motion being made, and the question being put, that persons living in that part of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, in the town of Taunton, which lies out of the limits of the borough of Taunton, who, at any time before the issuing of writs for calling a new parliament, take a room and boil a pot, within the said borough of Taunton, do thereby acquire a right of voting in the election of members to serve in parliament for the said borough; it passed in the negative.

The counsel were called in again, and Mr. Speaker acquainted them with the said resolution; and the sitting members' counsel proceeded to examine witnesses to justify other voters to which the petitioners' counsel objected, and then the counsel were directed to withdraw.

Ordered, that the further hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton be adjourned till Saturday morning next.

Saturday, August 27th, 1715, the house proceeded to the further hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton, and the counsel on both sides were called in; and the counsel for the sitting members proceeded to examine witnesses, to disqualify some of the voters for the petitioners, upon account of their receiving charity, and particularly as to a charity, called *Saunders's charity*: and the sitting members' counsel insisting to examine, as to that charity being given in the year 1713, and the petitioners' counsel opposing



their examining as to any persons who had not received that charity, within a year before the election ; the counsel, on both sides, were heard, touching the same, and then they withdrew.

And a motion being made, and the question being put, that the counsel for the sitting members be admitted to give evidence of persons having received Saunders's charity before the 2d of February, 1713-14, (which was exactly a year before the election,) it passed in the negative.

The counsel were called in again, and Mr. Speaker acquainted them with the said resolution.

Then the sitting members' counsel proceeded to examine witnesses, touching other voters for the petitioners having received other charities, and also for adding two votes to the sitting members' poll, and also in order to disqualify several of the petitioners' voters for bribery, and touching threats and other undue proceedings in relation to the election.

Ordered, that the further hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton be adjourned to Tuesday morning next.

Tuesday, August 30th, 1715, the house proceeded (according to order) to the further hearing of the merits of the election for the borough of Taunton ; and the counsel on both sides were called in, and the petitioners' counsel examined two witnesses, in order to discredit two of the sitting members' witnesses. After which, the sitting members' counsel summed up the evidence, and the petitioners' counsel replied, and then the counsel withdrew.

The question being put, That sir Francis Warre,

bart. is duly elected a burgess to serve in this present parliament, for the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, it passed in the negative.

The like question being put, with respect to Henry Portman, esq. it also passed in the negative.<sup>1</sup>

Resolved, that William Pynsent, esq. is duly elected to serve in this present parliament, for the said borough of Taunton.

Resolved, that James Smith, esq. is duly elected a burgess to serve in this present parliament, for the borough of Taunton.

Ordered, that the clerk of the crown do attend this house to-morrow morning, to amend the return for the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, by razing out the names of sir Francis Warre, bart. and Henry Portman, esq. and inserting the names of William Pynsent, esq. and James Smith, esq.<sup>2</sup>

The parliament, to which these gentlemen were thus, in consequence of their petition, returned, rendered itself remarkable in the English history; for, being elected to sit three, they passed an act to continue their seats for seven years. This has been thought a violation of the constitution, and a stretch, if not

<sup>1</sup> On each question the house divided, and the yeas went forth. On the first question, the tellers for the yeas were Mr. Elford and Mr. Rolt, thirty-two. Tellers for the noes, lord William Poulett and Mr. Minshull, seventy-two. On the second question, the tellers for the yeas were the earl of Hertford and Mr. Trelawny, thirty-one. Tellers for the noes, Mr. Yonge and Mr. Drake, sixty-nine. T.

<sup>2</sup> The copy of the journal of the House of Commons, and determinations of the honourable House of Commons concerning elections, communicated by Mr. Norris. T.

a breach, of the trust invested in them ; the effect of which has been, perhaps, to increase the influence of the crown, and to render a seat in parliament, in proportion as it lengthens the term of enjoyment, a more important object of acquisition.

*General Election, 1722.*

The dissolution of the first septennial parliament was followed with a new contest. The candidates were George Dean, esq. of Pyrland, and Goodenough Earle, esq. of Barton, near Taunton ; James Smith, esq. the late sitting member, and John Trenchard, esq. of Dorsetshire. The numbers that voted at the election, according to the mayor's books, were,

For Mr. Trenchard,	432		Mr. Dean,	-	-	295
Mr. Smith,	-	432		Mr. Earle,	-	289

Mr. Trenchard and Mr. Smith, according to this statement of the poll, were returned representatives for the borough. The other gentlemen, Mr. Dean and Mr. Earle, demanded a scrutiny, which was refused. They then petitioned the house, complaining of the partiality of the mayor, aldermen, and body corporate ; professing to disqualify two hundred and sixty of the sitting members' votes, and to add to their own poll sixty-six persons, whose votes had been refused by the mayor.<sup>1</sup> But the petition did not come to a hearing, and the gentlemen returned kept their seats.

Mr. Trenchard, descended from an ancient and

<sup>1</sup> The case of the Taunton petitioners, communicated by Mr. Way. T.

wealthy family of Boxworth, in the county of Dorset, was the son of sir John Trenchard, secretary of state to William III. He was born in 1669. He was designed for the law, and applied himself with great diligence to his proper studies, till he was called to the bar. He soon laid aside his profession, but gained great eminence of character, by his political writings and patriotic conduct. In 1698, assisted by Mr. Moyle,<sup>1</sup> he published a remarkable pamphlet, entitled, "An Argument shewing that a Standing Army is inconsistent with a free Government; and absolutely destructive to the Constitution of the English Monarchy." This argument was further enforced by "A short History of Standing Armies in England." These pieces attracted attention, and, by the conviction they carried with them, contributed greatly to the procuring of a majority in parliament, which obliged the king, though with the utmost reluctance, to send home his Dutch guards, and reduce the army to a moderate standard. Several occasional pamphlets, as various state occurrences arose, came from his pen, and met with a respectful reception from the public. But his two most distinguished works were his "Cato's Letters," and "The Independent Whig." The object at which the former pointed was the administration in

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Moyle, the son of sir Walter Moyle, was born at his father's seat, near Loo, in Cornwall, 1672, and died in 1726. He was a gentleman of a very amiable private character, and possessed of many excellent virtues: he had the cause of civil and religious liberty so much at heart, that he never omitted any fair opportunity of contributing to its support. His learning was deep and extensive, and his literary reputation was great, abroad, as well as at home.—*British Biography*, vol. viii. p. 202, 226. T.

state; the latter was directed against the hierarchy of the church. They both made their appearance in the year 1720. The former, after Mr. Trenchard's death, were collected together, and published under the title of "Cato's Letters; or Essays on Liberty, civil and religious, and other important Subjects:" in 4 volumes 12mo. The editor, in his preface, recommends them to the public, as containing impartial lessons of liberty and virtue, that will at all times be found seasonable and useful. Many papers of "The Independent Whig" were written at Fluke-house, Taunton, while Mr. Trenchard was there on the business of his election. They also, after his decease, were collected together and continued by his associate, Mr. Gordon, a native of North-Britain; whom Mr. Trenchard first took into his house as his amanuensis; and with whom he became united by the closest ties of friendship, by a kindred spirit, by similar studies, and united labours.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Trenchard, while he sat in the house, was a leading member; but he wore out the springs of life by intenseness of mind and close study; for he died in the 55th year of his age, on the 16th of December, 1723. The excellent virtues, which his private life displayed, were united to an ardent concern for the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gordon was editor of the following works: "A Cordial for low Spirits," in 3 vols. 12mo; and "The Pillars of Priestcraft and Orthodoxy shaken," in 2 vols. These have been since republished, and the latter enlarged into 4 vols. by the Rev. Mr. Baron. Mr. Gordon's chief work was the translation of Tacitus, with additional discourses. He was, for many years, first commissioner of wine licences: he was twice married: his second wife was the widow of his great friend Mr. Trenchard. He died 1750.—*British Biography*, vol. viii. p. 262, 263. note. T.

interest of mankind, and of the British nation and government. His name is handed down, in the pages of biography, as that of "one of the worthiest, one of the ablest, one of the most useful men that ever adorned and blest his country : his abilities were extraordinary, his virtues eminent, and his failings few and inconsiderable."<sup>1</sup>

The town of Taunton enjoyed the honour and services of such a representative, as we have seen, only for a very short time ; and soon found itself involved again in the evils and feuds of an election contest. On his decease, George Dean, esq. and Abraham Elton, esq. stood candidates for the borough. On which occasion there were two returns ; one executed by the mayor, in favour of Abraham Elton, esq. the other, by the constables and bailiffs, and several of the inhabitants, in favour of George Dean, esq. This last was tendered to Walter Robinson, esq. high sheriff of the county of Somerset, who refused to accept the same, but accepted and executed the indenture of return offered by the mayor.<sup>2</sup>

#### *General Election, 1741.*

The two succeeding elections of 1727 and 1734, by a coalition of parties, were peaceable. But the violence of party, or the views of interest, or both, threw the town into tumult and confusion, at the general election of 1741 ; when sir John Chapman, of London, baronet, and John Buck, of Bideford, esq. were elected, in opposition to Francis Fane, esq. the

<sup>1</sup> British Biography, vol. viii. p. 261—266. 8vo. T.

<sup>2</sup> The constables' petition to the Commons of Great Britain, communicated by Mr. Way. T.

representative in the two preceding parliaments, and Joshua Iremonger, of London, esq. who was a gentleman of established reputation for virtue, and a strict regard to religion.<sup>1</sup> But the virtues which form the private character, and the integrity which distinguishes the member of parliament, have frequently too little weight in turning the scale of elections.

*General Election, 1754.*

The parliamentary history of Taunton presents a period of unanimity from 1741 to 1754. The general election in the latter year was conducted on the principles of a coalition. John Halliday, esq. one of the representatives then chosen, had but a very transient enjoyment of his new dignity. His friends had formed great expectations from the knowledge, experience, and integrity, with which he had, for many years, discharged the duties of one honourable and useful office in the nation; and promised themselves that he would have carried into a higher and more extensive sphere the same activity of mind, and the same firm attachment to the cause of religion and liberty, which he had manifested in a former post. But death disappointed their hopes, and buried his rising honours in darkness. He was returned the 15th of April, and died on the 9th of June following, without having taken his seat in the house.<sup>2</sup>

The death of Mr. Halliday was followed by one of the most severe contests that ever disturbed a town. The parliament being prorogued, when Mr. Halliday

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hughes's Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Iremonger, 1744, p. 67, 68. T.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Amory's Funeral Sermon for John Halliday, esq. p. 22. T.

died, a new writ was not issued, till the time of its meeting in winter. But two gentlemen soon declaring themselves as candidates to represent the borough, the opposition was supported with spirit for about half a year; a space of time which gave full scope for the display of every manœuvre, and the exertion of every power, by which the parties could counteract each other's views. The houses of entertainment were kept open during all this time; by which enormous expenses were incurred; habits of idleness and licentiousness were formed, to the great injury of families, and of the woollen manufactory of the town, (for orders could not be executed, but were returned;) and the passions on each side were inflamed to that degree, that the election did not terminate without blood, and the loss of several lives. The candidate whom the country party supported was sir John Pole, bart. of Shute, in the county of Devon: the gentleman to whom the court party was attached was first Robert Webb, esq. a representative in a former parliament; and on his declining the contest, they took up Robert Maxwell, esq. (afterwards earl of Farnham,) who was returned; but so great was the rage of a disappointed mob, that he was carried from the poll to his lodgings, at the great risk of his life, which had a narrow escape from their violence. The mischiefs of this election left in many minds a painful remembrance; and should teach future generations the evils of a long and *premature* contest.

*General Election, 1768.*

A like scene of tumult and commotion was opening again in the year 1768. The candidates were lord Farnham and lord Thomond, in conjunction; and



Edward Willes, esq. solicitor-general, and Alexander Popham, esq. Nearly as soon as the canvass was finished, Mr. Willes was made a judge, and to him succeeded, as a candidate, Nathaniel Webb, esq. The two lords, disgusted with some perfidious treatment they had received, in the desertion of one of their principal friends and managers, retired from the contest, and left the field to Mr. Popham and Mr. Webb; who, without any other obstruction than a faint opposition from sir William Yea, bart. of Pyrland, were returned on the 18th of March.

Mr. Popham, who now for the first time had a seat in the house, was of the family of sir John Popham, the eminent and upright lord chief justice of the king's bench, in the reign of queen Elizabeth. The cause of humanity owes him great obligations for his share in several public acts of parliament, of a benevolent tendency, of which he was the parent; particularly for two, both passed in 1774; one for preserving the health of prisoners in gaols, and the other, for abolishing the fees that had been taken from prisoners acquitted, or discharged by proclamation for want of prosecution; who, by law, are presumed to be innocent, and are therefore, under the protection and provision of this act, immediately set free on such acquittal or discharge. There was a singular circumstance attending these benevolent statutes; which was, that Mr. Popham had occasion to call the late Mr. Howard to the bar of the house, to prove the state and condition of the gaols, which he had then visited in his neighbourhood, in order to shew the necessity of the regulations recommended to parliament. This first introduced that philanthropist

to public notice, who received the thanks of the house for his extraordinary humanity; which encouraged him to proceed in his humane exertions, and to carry his enquiries into the state of gaols, to the wonderful extent to which he afterwards pursued them.

To Mr. Popham also the alms-men of Mr. Huish's charity were indebted for the advance of their weekly allowance to two shillings and eight-pence per week, the original appointment of the founder, from two shillings to which it had fallen; as are all the felons in the different prisons in the county of Somerset, for the addition of one penny a day to the gaol allowance, which originated from a motion made by him when chairman of the quarter-sessions at Bruton, in 1783.

*General Election, 1774.*

At the next election, Nathaniel Webb, esq. offered himself in conjunction with Edward Stratford, esq. under the countenance of the prime minister (who was the recorder of the town,) and with the support of the corporation: on the other side, Alexander Popham, esq. and John Halliday, esq. appeared as candidates: which opposition drew on a serious and expensive contest, the final decision of which received the award of a committee of the House of Commons. The proceedings relating to this election are too interesting to be passed over without a minute detail.

Nathaniel Webb and Edward Stratford, esqrs. were returned representatives of the borough, the 18th of October, 1774; against which return Alexander Popham and John Halliday, esqrs. and several electors of the borough of Taunton, lodged a petition with the honourable House of Commons. On Friday the 24th

of February, 1775, the committee was chosen,<sup>1</sup> and on Saturday the 25th of February it met; when the petitions were read, setting forth,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The committee consisted of the following gentlemen :

Frederic Montague, esq. chairman,	} Members for	Higham-Ferrers.
Sir James Pennyman, bart. - - -		Beverley.
Abel Smith, esq. - - - - -		Aldborough, Yorkshire.
Herbert Mackworth, esq. - - -		Cardiff.
Hon. Charles Marsham, - - - -		Kent.
Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, bart.		Denbighshire.
Beaumont Hotham, esq. - - - -		Wigan.
Sir Henry Bridgeman, bart. - - -		Wenlock.
Francis Annesley, esq. - - - -		Reading.
Sir William Bagot, bart. - - -		Staffordshire.
Christopher Griffith, esq. - - -		Berkshire.
Jacob Wilkinson, esq. - - - -		Berwick.
Anthony James Keck, esq. - - -		Newton, Lancashire.

Nominees.

<i>Of the petitioners.</i>	} Members for	{	St. Michael.
Hon. Thomas Howard, - - - -			
<i>Of the sitting members.</i>	} Members for	{	Cardiganshire.
Viscount Lisburne, - - - - -			

Counsel.

For the petitioners.	For the sitting members.
Mr. Lee and Mr. Morris.	Mr. Gould and Mr. Hotchkiss.

<sup>2</sup> The petitions also brought forward some special charges against the mayor, namely, That, as returning officer, he had procured himself to be appointed mayor, to answer election purposes, and had, from unnecessary adjournments, protracted the poll from the 10th of October, when it began, to the 18th.

It was admitted, by the counsel for the petitioners, that the mayor was legally elected; but a great deal of evidence was gone into, to shew that he was not advanced to the mayoralty in *regular rotation*, but had got into the office for the purpose of promoting the interest of the sitting members, and had acted as the petitions stated, at the election.

After a considerable time had been spent in hearing this sort of

“ That the mayor had rejected many legal votes, which were tendered for the petitioners, and admitted many illegal votes for the sitting members :

“ That the petitioners were duly elected, by a great majority of legal votes, and ought to have been returned :

“ That the sitting members previous to, and during, the election, were guilty of bribery and corruption, by themselves and agents.

The last determination of the right of election in Taunton, 28th July, 1715,<sup>1</sup> proves, that in the borough of Taunton there is a clear distinction between *alms* and *charity* ; which was admitted by the counsel on both sides. “ Alms ” means parochial collection, or parish relief : “ Charity ” signifies sums arising from the revenue of certain specific funds, which have been established, or bequeathed, for the purpose of assisting the poor.

It was agreed on both sides, according to the determination of the house, on the 27th of August, 1715,

evidence, the chairman, by the direction of the committee, asked the counsel, whether they wished to lay such a charge against the returning officer, as might induce the committee to report *specially* against him ; or whether they intended to affect the numbers on the poll, by any undue act or acts of the returning officer. The answer to both questions was in the negative. They said, they only meant to give a *general idea* of his partiality. The committee, therefore, neither acquitted, nor condemned the returning officer ; but were of opinion, that the enquiry into his conduct was not necessary to the decision of the merits of the election, and consequently *waived* such enquiry. Douglas's History of the Cases of Controverted Elections, vol. I. p. 367—369. T.

<sup>1</sup> See page 319.

on the petition then before it, "That neither alms nor charity disqualify an elector in Taunton, unless they have been received within a year before the election."

It was agreed, that a *pot-waller*<sup>1</sup> is a person who furnishes his own diet, whether he be a housekeeper, or only a lodger.

And it was agreed, that, to be a pot-waller, qualified to vote at Taunton, it has been always understood, both before and since the determination, in 1715, That such person must have *a legal parochial settlement in the borough*. The counsel for the sitting members thought, that gentlemen of fortune were excepted out of this rule; but there does not seem to be any principle on which such a distinction can be supported.

The counsel for the petitioners said, that the journals of the house have recognised, that *apprentices* cannot be pot-wallers qualified to vote.

<sup>1</sup> Before the reformation there was in every parish a church-house, to which belonged spits, pots, crocks, &c. for dressing provisions. Here the housekeepers met, and were merry, and gave their charity. See Holt's Characters of the Kings and Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 180. Query, whether this custom does not point out the origin and the precise idea of the political distinction of rank implied by the word pot-waller. By this custom it became a visible characteristic of a specific ability and independence attached to those who furnished their own provisions; in opposition to those who eat of the food of others as servants, or partook of it as beneficiaries. The custom probably arose from the scarcity of chimneys, as houses were built with only one fire-place. In early times this distinction might carry great weight and respect in it, on account of the scarcity of money and the prevalence of a state of villanage, which would render a gift of victuals a valuable kind of alms, and make a power of providing their own table to be considered as a degree of opulence. T.

The numbers on the poll, as produced by the returning officer, were as follow :—

For Nathaniel Webb, esq.	- - -	260
Hon. Edward Stratford,	- -	240
John Halliday, esq.	- - -	202
Alexander Popham, esq.	- -	201

The counsel for the petitioners proposed to disqualify of the voters for the sitting members,

As having received the town charity,	-	114
———— the churchwardens' charity,	-	2
Chelsea pensioners - - - - -	-	3
Not having settlements in Taunton - -	-	19
Not answering the definition of pot-		
wallars - - - - -	-	15 or 16
Certificate-men - - - - -	-	2 or 3
Apprentices - - - - -	-	2
Bribery agents - - - - -	-	2

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Total - 159

If they succeeded in this, they said there would be a clear majority for the petitioners ; but that, at all events, for they did not foresee what objections there might be to their own votes, they would prove the charge of bribery so directly and palpably, as to disqualify the sitting members and make the election void as to them.

In the course of the proceedings it was settled, that *Chelsea pensioners might vote.*

Posterior to the determination in 1715, in the progress of the same cause, it was made an objection to certain voters, that they were certificate-men. From this circumstance the counsel for Mr. Halliday and

Mr. Popham inferred, that it was understood, at that time, that such persons were not entitled to vote; and after some argument, it was agreed by the counsel for the sitting members, that, by the *lex loci*, *certificate-men cannot vote for this borough*.

The counsel for the sitting members endeavoured to prove fraud in the distribution of the charities, with a view to election purposes; and they brought witnesses to impeach the credit of those who had given positive evidence of bribery, by the agents of the sitting members.

On their part they proposed to disqualify of the votes for the petitioners,

On account of the town and Meredith's charities	2
As having received alms, and the town charity	1
On account of the town charity, and having no settlement	- - - - - 7
As having received the town charity, though their names were not entered in the constable's book, who is the person appointed to distribute that charity	- - - - - 3
As being the turnpike-man	- - - - - 1
As having no settlement	- - - - - 7
As not answering the definition of pot-wallers	7
As certificate-men	- - - - - 3

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Total - 31

They also endeavoured to prove bribery on the petitioners.

The cause lasted from the 24th of February to the 19th of March. On the latter day, the committee, by their chairman, informed the house, that they had determined;

“That John Halliday, esq. and Alexander Popham, esq. were duly elected, and ought to have been returned.”<sup>1</sup>

This determination gave great satisfaction to the country, as well as to that portion of the electors, who had asserted their own privileges against the combined influence of the minister and the corporation. On the 18th of March, Mr. Halliday and Mr. Popham made their public entry into Taunton, accompanied by a great number of gentlemen, forming a cavalcade of nearly a thousand horse and many coaches. They alighted at the bottom of the parade, and walked under a triumphal arch up to the market-house, where an entertainment was provided in the assembly-room : the day was spent with great joy and conviviality,<sup>2</sup> and concluded with a crowded ball and a general illumination.

The occasion indeed was singular, and the grounds of joy, considered in a constitutional view, just ; and to the members, and those other gentlemen,<sup>3</sup> who, animated by patriotic principles, were particularly active in supporting the petition, public gratitude was due for their exertions at that season.

This election brought after it serious consequences. It was followed by various actions for bribery ; and

<sup>1</sup> Douglas's History of the Cases of Controverted Elections, vol. i. p. 366—375. T.

<sup>2</sup> From a memorandum communicated by Mr. Norris. T.

<sup>3</sup> Posterity should know their names : amongst others Mr. John Norman, Mr. Joseph Melhuish, Mr. John Clitsome, grocer, Mr. Joseph Jeffries, Mr. Luke Noble, and Mr. John Noble, will be particularly remembered, for their vigour and zeal in the public cause, at that time. T.



the mayor, at the suit of each member, was prosecuted for a false return : on one he was acquitted, and on the other convicted. He was also convicted on an action, for refusing the vote of a reputable housekeeper, who at the time was also churchwarden, on the plea of having before admitted to poll a partner in the same house, and having laid it down as a rule, to receive only one vote out of the same house. Such actions must be considered as important, because they tend to guard the invaluable rights of election, and teach a lesson of great caution and impartiality to returning officers.

At the general election in 1780, the candidates were Alexander Popham, esq. John Halliday, esq. and John Roberts, esq. afterwards major-general Roberts, who had been the mayor in 1774. Mr. Popham declining to stand the poll, the other two gentlemen were of course returned.

In 1782, the death of general Roberts brought on another election, when sir James Langham, bart. and Mr. (afterwards sir Benjamin) Hammet, offered themselves to represent the borough, and the latter was elected.

In 1784, a sudden dissolution of parliament renewed the struggles of electioneering. The candidates were Alexander Popham, esq. Benjamin Hammet, esq. and John Halliday, esq. The last of these gentlemen now judging fit to retire before the poll commenced, the other two were declared duly elected, and resumed their seats in the house.

*General Election, 1790.*

The dissolution of parliament in 1790 brought on,

with a new election, a spirited contest. The candidates were, on one side, sir Benjamin Hammet, and Alexander Popham, esq. the representatives of the town in the preceding parliament ; and on the other side, John Halliday and William Moreland, esqrs. The poll opened on June the 28th, 1790, and did not close till the 13th of July, having lasted fourteen days, and having been carried on, by the mayor, with unremitting assiduity, for every day, except Sundays, from nine in the morning till seven o'clock, or later, in the evening. At the final close, the numbers were found to be,

For Sir Benjamin Hammet,	291
Alexander Popham, esq.	257
John Halliday, esq. - -	239
William Moreland, esq.	183

Upon which, the first two gentlemen were declared duly elected. The contest, however, did not terminate here ; but was resumed, and followed up by petitions, lodged with the House of Commons, on the first of December ; one from the unsuccessful candidates, and the other from six electors, complaining of an undue election and return for the borough. On the 4th of December, an order was made, for taking the said petitions into consideration on Thursday the 24th of February, 1791. On the 16th of December, the speaker acquainted the house, that the petitioners, the candidates and electors, had not, nor had either of them, entered into a recognizance in respect of such petitions, according to the directions of the act of the 20th Geo. III. entitled, " An Act for the further regulation of the trials of controverted elections, or

returns of members to serve in parliament." Upon this, the said act, on a motion of the house, was read, and the orders for taking the same petitions into consideration were discharged.\*

A short time previously to the general election in 1796, Mr. Popham addressed his constituents, informing them that it was not his intention to offer himself again, as one of their representatives, on which, sir Benjamin Hammet, knt. William Moreland, and Walter Boyd, esqrs. stood forward as candidates, and canvassed the borough; but before the day of election, Mr. Boyd retired, and the other two gentlemen were returned as duly elected.

*General Election, 1802.*

Parliament having been dissolved on the 29th of June, 1802, and a new one summoned to meet on the 31st of August following, the sheriff's precept for the election of members for Taunton arrived on Thursday the first of July, which was indorsed by the bailiffs and constables, and proclamation made the next day, fixing the election to commence on Tuesday the 6th of that month.

On this occasion the candidates were John Hammet, esq. William Moreland, esq. and Robert Robinson, esq.

This election proved of great importance in settling the disputed question as to the right of exercising the duties of returning officer for this borough. In consequence of the dissolution of the corporation, and there being no mayor, Mr. Robinson, and his legal advisers, contended that Mr. Hammet, who held,

\* From the votes of the house, for the 16th of December, 1790.

under the bishop of Winchester, lord of the manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean, the office of one of the patent bailiffs of the said manor, was the legal returning officer of the borough, and therefore ineligible to stand as a candidate at this election. That the reader may the better understand the nature of this contest, the proceedings will be detailed at some length.

Tuesday, July 6th, 1802, the candidates and their friends being seated on the hustings, proclamation was made for silence. The precept was then read, which was in the following form :—

“ To the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses, the bailiffs, portreeves, and constables, of the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, and all others whom it may concern, &c.”

This precept was indorsed by Thomas Woodforde and Charles Cox, bailiffs, and John Hill and John Coles, constables ; all these officers having been chosen by a jury, in the lord of of the manor's court-leet.

The act of the 2d of Geo. cap. 24. against bribery, having been read, the bailiffs and constables, and William Saunders, who claimed to be the returning officer of this borough, in right of his having been a member of the former corporate body, took the oath required by that act to be taken by returning officers, which was administered to them by James Coles, esq. a magistrate of the county of Somerset.

The above-mentioned five persons, claiming to be the returning officers of the borough of Taunton, then chose John Brickdale, esq. for their assessor.

The several candidates were next proposed by their respective friends, after which a shew of hands was

called for, and Mr. Woodforde, the senior bailiff chosen in the court-leet, declared the same to be in favour of Mr. Moreland and Mr. Hammet. A poll was then demanded by the friends of Mr. Robinson, after which, the agent of that gentleman delivered to the assessor the following notice:—

“ To the returning officer or officers of the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset.

“ I request you to nominate and appoint two or more persons, to administer the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, the declaration of fidelity, the oath of abjuration, and the declaration or affirmation now required by law to be taken, made, or subscribed by voters, at elections of members to serve in parliament, and to certify the names of the respective electors, who shall take such oaths, or subscribe and make such declaration or affirmation, respectively.

Witness my hand this 6th day of July, 1802.

“ ROBERT ROBINSON.”

Three commissioners were then appointed to administer the oaths, and had a room assigned them at the market-house, where they sat for that purpose.

When the first tally came to the hustings, Mr. Robinson's agent, understanding that the commissioners had not administered the oath against bribery to the electors, insisted on that oath being taken by each voter, previously to his giving his vote; which was accordingly done by them at the hustings, and they were not sent back, as by law required, to take it before the commissioners.

Mr. Meade, the agent for Mr. Robinson, aware that Mr. Hammet was one of the patent bailiffs of the

bishop of Winchester, tendered to him, as the alleged legal returning officer, the first ten votes, at the same time saying that all the votes he should offer for Mr. Robinson should be considered as offered to Mr. Hammet; but the latter gentleman declined receiving them, as it would have been admitting his own ineligibility; it having been long ago decided, "That sheriffs of counties, mayors, or *bailiffs* of boroughs, are not eligible in their respective jurisdictions, as being returning officers;" and by a resolution of the House of Commons, June 2, 1685, "No mayor, *bailiff*, or other officer of the borough, who is a proper officer to whom the precept ought to be directed, is capable of being elected to serve in parliament for the same borough, of which he is mayor, *bailiff*, or officer at the time of the election." With respect to the precept, the sheriff is bound, by the statute of 7th and 8th of William III. to deliver that document to the proper officer, and no other. Mr. Hammet, it was stated, was in the town of Taunton when the precept came, but he did not indorse it as one of the patent *bailiffs* of the bishop of Winchester.

After this statement had been made by Mr. Robinson's agent, the votes were taken by the five persons claiming to be returning officers, saving all legal objections.

Wednesday, July 7th, second day. Before the poll commenced this morning, Mr. Smith, counsel for Mr. Hammet, stated, "That Mr. Thomas Woodforde, Mr. Charles Cox, Mr. John Hill, and Mr. John Coles, are the returning officers, acting here as such, and that they came to act as such—That Mr. William Saunders

claims to be returning officer upon distinct grounds— And that there are five gentlemen who claim to be returning officers.”

Mr. Robinson gave the following notice to those five persons, and Mr. Pell, his counsel, protested that they were not the legal returning officers of the borough of Taunton :—

“ To the returning officer of the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset.

“ I hereby request you to cause to be administered to all the voters, who propose, at this election, to give their vote or votes to John Hammet, esq. and William Moreland, esq. all the oaths required by law to be taken by voters, at elections of members to serve in parliament; and also all the declarations and affirmations required by law to be made by voters, at elections of members to serve in parliament. And I require that the said oaths may be administered, and the said declarations and affirmations taken, according to law.

“ ROBERT ROBINSON.”

“ Dated 7th July, 1802.”

A notice, exactly similar to the above, but addressed to the returning officers, was also delivered by Mr. Pell to those five persons.

Notwithstanding Mr. Pell thus distinctly required that the voters should take the bribery oath according to law, it was still administered by the poll-clerk to every voter at the hustings, as on the preceding day, and not before the commissioners, who are empowered by the act of the 42d of the king to administer it. After Mr. Moreland's third tally had polled, Mr. Pell again generally objected that the bribery oath was not

properly administered, and required it to be taken according to law, and desired that this objection might apply to all voters.

The poll-clerk, however, still persisted in administering the oath, and the poll was kept open in this manner until about five o'clock in the afternoon, when a riot took place at the hustings, caused by a person, of the name of William Dean, striking one of the voters in Mr. Hammet's tally named John Hughes, in consequence of Hughes having given Mr. Robinson, a plumper or double vote. Upon which Mr. Robinson by the advice of his counsel, left the hustings with his friends, and refused to return again.

In about a quarter of an hour the poll-clerk made several proclamations, both at the hustings and in different parts of the borough, that the voters might come forward, for that no riot or disturbance then existed. Mr. Pell then went to the hustings, and said Mr. Robinson's voters did not feel they should be protected, if they came forward for him any more at that place, after what had just happened, and therefore he (Mr. Pell) had desired Mr. Robinson not to return, but to seek redress elsewhere; that Mr. Robinson protested against all further proceedings, and would not appear again at the hustings. Mr. Pell then returned to Mr. Robinson's committee-room, and drew up a hand-bill to the following purport:—

“To the worthy and independent electors of the borough of Taunton.

“Gentlemen—A considerable riot having taken place this afternoon at the hustings, in consequence of two gentlemen in Mr. Hammet's tally having given me their double vote, I have, by the advice of my



friends, absented myself from the poll, and have declined any further attendance there, on this occasion. I therefore beg to inform you, that I am determined in a legal way to seek that redress which the law allows, both for you and myself, and the spirited independent men whose privileges have this day been so grossly violated, and whose persons have been so shamefully assaulted. And I assure you, that, on the first opportunity that shall present itself, I again intend offering myself as a candidate to represent you in parliament, and do most solemnly assure you, that if the freedom of election had not now been interrupted, I should have continued at the poll, as long as any voters would have polled for me; and I pledge myself to stand the poll on any future opportunity, as long as a voter will offer for me, as I am fully confident of being supported by a very great majority among you.

I am, gentlemen,

Your much obliged, and very humble servant,

ROBERT ROBINSON."

"Taunton, 7th July, 1802."

This hand-bill being printed and circulated, the poll was kept open about half an hour after Mr. Pell left the hustings; but no person voted afterwards that night, and the proceedings were adjourned to the next morning.

Thursday, July 8th, third day.—Previously to the court sitting this day, the poll-clerk came to Mr. Robinson's committee-room, and told his agents, that the returning officers were about to open the poll, and desired Mr. Robinson's attendance, which he refused, agreeably to the advice of his counsel. The poll was kept open this day precisely in the same manner as

on the former days, until about five o'clock in the afternoon, when the commissioners, appointed to administer the oaths to the voters, shut their books, as they had done on the former days, about that time, thinking the poll would be opened again the next morning. A little after five o'clock, the poll-clerk made a proclamation, that unless voters came forward and polled within five minutes, the poll would be closed. One voter polled within the five minutes, and the returning officers closed their books within two minutes after this vote was taken, without making another proclamation for voters to come in, although they were told there were a great many voters to poll, and that they would come as soon as they could be sworn.

The poll, however, finally closed here, and Mr. Moreland and Mr. Hammet having the majority of votes, separate returns were made ; one by the constables and bailiffs, and the other by Mr. Saunders, who claimed to be the returning officer, in right of having been an alderman of the late corporation ; and though there were then residing within the borough three of the capital burgesses of the former body corporate, not the least application was made to them on this occasion.

On the meeting of parliament in the spring of the year 1803, a petition was presented to the House of Commons, by Mr. Robinson, and also by certain electors of the borough of Taunton, complaining of the undue election and return of John Hammet, esq. and William Moreland, esq. the two sitting members for this borough.

The allegations on which the petitioners sought to set aside this election were,

First, that the two returns which were made, the one by the constables and the bailiffs of the borough, (called in the petition "summoning bailiffs") and the other by a man styling himself an "alderman of the late corporation," were neither of them made by the legal returning officer; that both returns were consequently void; and that *the legal returning officer for the borough of Taunton is the person holding the office of bailiff, under a grant or patent from the bishop of Winchester, the lord of the manor.*

Secondly, that the bribery oath was not administered by the commissioners appointed for that purpose, (as well as to administer the other oaths) but by the poll-clerk, who, it was submitted after the passing of the 42d of Geo. III. had no authority to administer it.

Thirdly, that the persons assuming the office of returning officer acted improperly in closing the poll in the manner they did, as they only gave five minutes notice for the voters to come in, though they were told there were upwards of forty who remained unpolled, and at a time too, when the commissioners for administering the oaths had shut their books for the night, and sent away voters till the next morning.

In support of the first allegation, the petitioners entered into a history of the ancient elections of this borough, and of the persons who had exercised the duties of returning officer. They alleged, first,

That in the earliest period of the history of parliament, the sheriff made the return for cities and boroughs, as well as for the county :—

That by the 23d of Henry VI. sheriffs first made out precepts, and the mayor or bailiffs of the town were constituted the returning officer :—

That not any returning officer for this borough is found till the 12th of Edward IV. in which year William Bodell, *bailiff* of the town and borough of Taunton, made the return to the sheriff:—

That in the 17th of Edward IV. the bailiffs of the borough, and four burgesses, made the return to the sheriff:—

That the next returns for this borough were made by the patent bailiff, appointed by the bishop of Winchester, and continued to be so made, with the interruption of about thirty years, until the town obtained a charter; from which period the mayor assumed the duties of returning officer:—

That from the 12th of Edward IV. to the 14th of Elizabeth, the bailiff, by character or name, made the returns either separately or with the burgesses; but during the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth there was a non-user by the patent bailiff of his office of returning officer, and the common constables with the burgesses usurped the right of returning the members for the borough, and made four returns:—

That by this non-user, and by the interposition of the act of 12th Cha. II. abrogating feudal tenures and some ancient offices, it is pretended the patent bailiff is precluded from ever again resuming the right with which the statute of 23d Hen. VI. expressly invested him:—

That in the 1st year of Charles I. the constables were joined by the bailiffs, chosen in the court-leet, in making the return:—

That in the 2d of Charles I. the town obtained a charter, and the mayor, by the 23d of Henry VI.

became the returning officer, and so continued till 1792, when the corporation was dissolved :

That after the dissolution of the corporate body, the constables and bailiffs, chosen in the court-leet, made the return.

It was further contended in support of the first allegation, that the precept for this election having been directed " To the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses, the *bailiffs*, portreeves, and constables, of the borough of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, and others whom it may concern," &c. and the *bailiffs* being named before the portreeves and constables, the *patent bailiff*, or the superior officer of the bishop of Winchester, was evidently meant, and not the bailiffs chosen by the jury in the court-leet, who in the first of Charles I. were named, in the return then made, after the constables, and shews that they were considered very inferior officers even to the portreeves and constables, and are not therefore to be taken for the bailiffs alluded to in the sheriff's precept, and ought to have given a receipt for such precept.

The petitioners then stated, that " the persons who claimed to be the returning officers were the bailiffs chosen by the jury in the bishop's court-leet, and that the two constables were also chosen in the said court-leet, (*one of the candidates being the patent bailiff* of the bishop :) that the precept was delivered to them by mistake instead of the patent bailiff, Mr. Hammet, who was at that time in the town : that proclamation was made by the bailiffs chosen in the court-leet, and they alone indorsed the precept ; but when the election came on, a person named William Saunders, who had

resided the preceding fifteen years at Bristol and other places fifty miles distant from Taunton, and who then held the office of inspector of duties on windows under the crown, (which disqualified him from voting) appeared on the hustings, and claimed to be a returning officer distinctly, *as having been one of the aldermen of the old corporation in 1789, though he was not in that office when the corporation ceased to exist in 1792*, and had never acted in any corporate character since. In the scramble for the office, every person who made a claim for it was admitted, and these five persons, the petitioners stated, therefore took upon themselves to preside as the returning officers.

It was further contended on the part of the petitioners, that the election of Mr. Hammet is a void election on these grounds—It is manifest, both from the history of the town and its present state, that the bishop of Winchester has from time immemorial been, not only the lord of the bailiwick, lordship, and manor, but exercised by himself or his officers, whilst no charter existed vesting the civil power in the corporation, the whole civil power over the town, market, and borough of Taunton; that so long since as the reign of Edward the fourth, his bailiff (which office Mr. Hammet one of the candidates holds) acted as the returning officer, and continued so to act, with the exception of thirty years in the reign of queen Elizabeth, up to the period when the first charter of incorporation was granted: that from that time, namely, from 1627, to the year 1792, the mayor, as chief magistrate under the charter, exercised the right of making the return; and it was

submitted, that when that officer no longer existed in fact or in law, the right reverted to the patent bailiff of the bishop by prescription; and that there being but one solitary instance of the summoning bailiffs, (as the petitioners called them) that is, the bailiffs chosen in the court-leet, which was in the first of Charles I. they cannot be considered as officers competent to have made the return at the last general election, *not being the deputies* of the patent bailiff: that the present grant of the office being to three persons can make no difference, for it is an appointment to the office of bailiff, but instead of one life it is for three, and they are bound to execute it either by themselves or their deputies: that it is precisely the same sort of patent office as the bailiff of Westminster, the bailiffs of the bishops of Peterborough and Winchester, or the bailiff of the bishop of Durham. Northallerton is a case exactly in point; for that place being an ancient borough without a corporation, it is governed by a bailiff deputed by patent for life, and authorized by the bishop of Durham, as lord of the manor; and his bailiff or deputy presides at the election of members of parliament (vide Oldfield, vol. ii. p. 285.) Aldborough, in the county of York, is another case in point: that borough has no corporation, and the lord of the manor's bailiff is at this day the returning officer.

The petitioners therefore contended, that in all towns and boroughs, subject to manerial rights, and to the authority of the lord, where there is no charter existing, and where there is such an officer as a bailiff appointed by the lord of the manor, who exercises a jurisdiction over the town, such bailiff

is, *ex officio*, the legal returning officer, and that whilst such an officer remains, no inferior officer, either constable, or summoning bailiffs, (meaning the bailiffs chosen in the court-leet,) can be the legal returning officer. The office being in commission, or granted to one, can make no difference : it is still the office which has existed immemorially, and the person exercising it to be, from before time of memory, the returning officer : even if there were a mayor, it has been doubted whether a charter from the crown, giving a new order of government to the civil administration of the borough, could supersede the ancient elective administrator or returning officer. The petitioners therefore submitted under all the circumstances, that the proper returning officers for the borough of Taunton are those persons who hold the office of bailiffs of the town, as described in the patent, or their deputies, and not the annual summoning bailiffs, or those chosen in the court-leet.

‘ The petitioners next adverted to the return made by the constables, for the purpose of invalidating that return. There were four returns made by the constables, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, but the petitioners submitted that those could not legally establish the right of exercising the duties of returning officer to be in them ; for though there are cases to be met with in borough towns, where the constables are acknowledged as returning officers, yet this happens where the civil power of the borough is, by prescription, vested in the constables, and where no *superior officer or magistrate was known*. At Taunton the fact is different ; for even during the existence of the charter, when the mayor was the presiding officer over the



borough, the justices of the county had ever a concurrent authority and jurisdiction, and the patent bailiffs still continued to be appointed by the bishop of Winchester.

‘ The petitioners then stated, that the charters of incorporated towns generally provide, that no justices, but those of the body corporate, shall interfere in their proceedings and jurisdiction ; but there is in the letters patent of the 29th of Charles II. incorporating the inhabitants of the borough of Taunton, *a marked distinction, in this respect, from all other charters.* For the letters patent appoint that there shall always be *six justices of the peace of the county*, nominated from time to time, by the chancellor, or the keeper of the great seal, who shall be justices within the borough, and its precincts, to act as the other justices of the borough ; but that no one of them shall be compelled to accept the mayoralty or any other office in the borough, or be subject to any punishments or penalties imposed by the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses. The petitioners then state that two of the county magistrates so appointed were then living, whose warrants, &c. the constables executed, and under whom they performed a great part of their duty, thus *superseding*, it is imagined, *the constables, jurisdiction over the borough*, as peace officers, and consequently invalidating their return of members to serve in parliament. Besides this, there are more forcible reasons why the constables, above every other class of officers, should never be permitted to act as returning officers : Taunton is a borough, where the right of voting is in the *potwallers*, and this right, according to the last resolution of the

House of Commons, (28th July, 1715,) is in the inhabitants being potwallers, and not receiving alms, or charity. A potwaller is a person who furnishes his own diet, whether he be a householder, or only a lodger. To be, however, a potwaller qualified to vote for the borough of Taunton, such person must have a legal parochial settlement in the borough. "Not receiving Alms" is understood to prohibit persons from voting, who have received alms within a year before the *teste* of the writ. "Charity" signifies sums arising from the revenues of certain specific funds, which have been established or bequeathed for the purpose of assisting the poor. The constables have the distribution of some of the principal charities of the town, and in a borough constituted like that of Taunton, these funds are very liable to be employed to advance electioneering designs, rather than to relieve industrious persons in distress; and that they have been so employed, (though not at this day by the constables,) will appear from the following extract from a decree of the Court of Chancery, made in the year 1729, in a suit instituted about the town charities; which decree emphatically recites, "That there are several public charities in the said town, that ought to be annually paid, all which, within these twelve years past, have been either concealed and turned into private advantages, or misapplied, and particularly about the time of elections of members of parliament."

'By the annals of past times, the impolicy is learnt of suffering any persons, who have the distribution of these charities, to act so principal a part as that of returning officer in a borough, where the right of

voting is in the potwallers. There are a thousand instances, since the resolution of the house declaring those disqualified from voting who have received charity, of a clandestine and partial distribution of the charities, by which the voters of the lower class have been eventually and insidiously cut off from the exercise of their valuable franchise. There is hardly any method to prevent the misapplication of the charities a year before an expected election, and if the constables are to preside as returning officers for the borough, this conclusion is inevitable—That whatever objections should be made against them, in the scandalous distribution of these charities, they will still be the judges of their own venal conduct, and have the sole power of deciding on the votes of others at elections, so that the voters would be cut off, or not, just as the constables pleased. In short, they would be the witnesses in the cause, and the judges, and no one could contradict them with effect.

‘ The next return to be observed upon is that made by William Saunders, calling himself an “alderman” of the late corporation of Taunton. Upon this return, it is conceived, a single observation will be sufficient. There is not any borough throughout England, whether by prescription or charter, the constitution of which recognises such a character as an “alderman” for the returning officer. The petitioners stated, that they should be able to prove, that the corporation had ceased to exist ever since the year 1792, and that Saunders, who came to Taunton from Bristol, upon the occasion of the late election, had not done any act as a member of the old corporation, for fourteen years past. In

addition to this, it could be shewn by the receipt given for the precept to the sheriff, that Saunders was not in the town at the time, or at least that he gave no receipt for the precept, and on that account alone, it was apprehended, under the act of 7th and 8th of William III. he was incapacitated from acting as returning officer.

‘ Under these circumstances, the petitioners presumed to hope, that the committee would be of opinion, that none of the returns were good, and that the legal returning officer for the borough of Taunton is the *bailiff appointed by patent*, by the bishop of Winchester.

‘ The petitioners then stated, that they were ready to prove, by evidence, the other two allegations, relating to the undue administration of the bribery oath, and the illegal mode of closing the poll.

‘ Wednesday, May 5th, 1803, the committee proceeded to take into consideration the petitions, complaining of an undue election and return for the borough of Taunton, John Lowther, esq. in the chair.

‘ Mr. Adam, on the part of the petitioners, having summed up his case, the committee deliberated thereupon ; and a statement having been delivered in by the petitioners and read, and also a statement of the sitting members, the committee came to the following determinations :—

‘ *Determined*, That the legal and most ancient returning officer for Taunton is not the bailiff appointed by the bishop of Winchester, lord of the manor of Taunton and Taunton-Dean.

‘ *Determined*, That the bailiffs and constables of the

borough of Taunton appointed at a court-leet, held annually in and for the said borough, are not the legal returning officers of the said borough.

‘ *Determined*, That the constables of the borough of Taunton appointed at the court-leet, held annually in and for the said borough, are not the legal returning officers of the said borough.

‘ *Determined*, That the bailiffs of the borough of Taunton appointed at a court-leet, held annually in and for the said borough, are the legal returning officers of the said borough.

‘ *Determined*, That the petition of Robert Robinson, esq. did not appear to the said select committee to be frivolous and vexatious.

‘ *Determined*, That the petition of the electors of the said borough of Taunton did not appear to the said select committee to be frivolous or vexatious.

‘ *Determined*, That the opposition to the said petitions did not appear to the said select committee to be frivolous and vexatious.

*General Election, 1806.*

‘ On the dissolution of parliament in 1806, soon after the death of Mr. Pitt, and the coming into office of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, a strong contest took place at Taunton. The candidates were John Hammet and William Moreland, esqrs. the late members, and Alexander Baring, esq. second son of Sir Francis Baring, bart. At the final close of the poll, the numbers were,

For Mr. Hammet,	-	370
Mr. Baring,	- -	341
Mr. Moreland,	-	216

‘ Upon which Mr. Hammet and Mr. Baring were returned.

‘ On the meeting of parliament, Mr. Moreland presented a petition to the house, complaining of this return, which being referred to a committee, they reported that the sitting members were duly elected, and that Mr. Moreland’s petition was frivolous and vexatious.

‘ In the following year, on the dissolution of Lord Grenville’s administration, a new parliament was called, when Mr. Hammet and Mr. Baring were returned without opposition.

‘ The death of Mr. Hammet, in 1811, occasioned a short contest between Henry Powell Collins, esq. of Hatch Court, near this town, and ——— Dashwood, esq. for the vacant seat, when Mr. Collins was elected by a large majority.

‘ At the general election in 1812, a sudden and unexpected opposition took place. Samuel Colleton Graves, esq. son of Rear-Admiral Richard Graves, of Hembury Fort, in the county of Devon, offered himself as a candidate against the two former members. After keeping open the poll for three days, at the final close the numbers stood thus :—

For Mr. Baring, - - 258

Mr. Collins, - - 214

Mr. Graves, - - 62

When the two former were returned as duly elected.

*General Election, 1818.*

‘ The general election in 1818 brought on a severe contest for this borough. The candidates were Alexander Baring, esq. and Henry Powell Collins,

esq. the two late members, and Sir William Burroughs, bart. formerly a judge in India. The poll commenced on Friday the 19th of June, 1818, and continued five days, the progress and termination of which were as follow :—

	<i>Baring.</i>	<i>Burroughs.</i>	<i>Collins.</i>
First day, June 19,.....	243	138	123
Second day, — 20,.....	80	66	38
Third day, — 22,.....	76	56	48
Fourth day, — 23,.....	12	16	36
Fifth day, — 24,.....	30	28	54
	<hr/> 441	<hr/> 304	<hr/> 299

‘ Mr. Baring and Sir William Burroughs were accordingly returned ; but on the meeting of parliament, a petition, signed by six electors, on behalf of themselves and others, inhabitants of the borough of Taunton, was presented to the house of commons on the 4th of February, 1819, setting forth,

“ That at the last election of members to serve in parliament for the said borough, Alexander Baring, esq. Henry Powell Collins, esq. and Sir William Burroughs, bart. were candidates, and that the said Alexander Baring had at such election a majority of good and legal votes over the said Henry Powell Collins and Sir William Burroughs ; that at such election Thomas Woodforde, surgeon, and William Cox, ironmonger, the then returning officers of the said borough, illegally, improperly, and unduly admitted many persons, who were not qualified to vote at the said election, to poll for the said Sir William Burroughs, and refused and rejected the votes of many persons, who were well and duly qualified to vote at the said election, and who offered and tendered

their votes for the said Henry Powell Collins ; and that thereby an undue, illegal, and colourable majority of votes was put upon the poll for the said Sir William Burroughs ; that the said Thomas Woodforde and William Cox, the said returning officers, have illegally and unjustly returned the said Sir William Burroughs as one of the members to represent the said borough in parliament, although the said Henry Powell Collins had a great majority of good and legal votes, and ought, in justice, to have been returned as one of the members to represent the said borough, instead of the said Sir William Burroughs, to the great prejudice of the petitioners. The petitioners therefore humbly pray, that the house will take the premises into their consideration, and declare the said Henry Powell Collins to be duly elected as one of the members to serve in parliament for the said borough, instead of the said Sir William Burroughs, and grant such relief in the premises as to the house shall seem meet."

' This petition having been read, the house made an order to take the same into consideration, on Thursday the 1st of April.

' March 17th, 1819, the order for considering the petition of the voters on Thursday the 1st of April, relating to the election for Taunton, was read and discharged, and the same was ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 6th of May.

' Thursday, May 6th, three hundred and forty-two members being present in the house, the petition of James Bryant, and other voters, complaining of the election for the borough of Taunton, was considered ; the names of members were drawn out of the glasses,



and the number of forty-nine names being complete, the list was delivered to the parties, who, having returned to the bar, the reduced list was delivered in; to which the name of Mr. Holmes, the nominee for the petitioners, and the name of Mr. Bennet, the nominee for the sitting member, being added, the same was called over as follows:—Mr. Agar Ellis, Mr. Miles, Sir George Cockburn, Mr. Fitzhugh, Mr. Bagwell, Mr. Protheroe, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Turton, Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Webb, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Alexander, Mr. William Cust, Mr. Holmes, and Mr. Bennet; and then the committee were sworn.

‘ Friday, May 7th, the house was informed, that the select committee had determined,

“ That sir William Burroughs, bart. is not duly elected a burgess, to serve in this present parliament, for the borough of Taunton :—

“ That Henry Powell Collins, esq. is duly elected, and ought to have been returned, a burgess, to serve in this present parliament, for the said borough :—

“ That the opposition of the said sir William Burroughs to the petition of voters did not appear to the committee to be frivolous and vexatious :—

“ *Ordered*, That the deputy clerk of the crown do attend on Monday next, to amend the return.”

‘ Monday, May 10th, 1819, the deputy clerk of the crown attended the house, according to order, and amended the return for the borough of Taunton.

‘ On this decision being made known, Mr. Collins made a grand public entry into Taunton, attended by an immense concourse of persons in carriages, on horseback, and on foot. The day was celebrated, by the friends and supporters of that gentleman, by dinners

at the principal inns, and the populace were regaled on the parade with several hogsheads of strong beer and cider.

‘It may not be improper to mention, that sir William Burroughs did not enter into any defence of his election before the committee, notwithstanding he was strongly urged so to do by the principal persons who had given him their support in this contest.

*General Election, 1820.*

‘The death of his majesty king George III. on the 29th of January, 1820, and the accession of George IV. to the throne, brought on a dissolution of parliament, and one of the most severe contests took place at Taunton, that had ever been known. Mr. Collins now retired from the representation of this borough, and the candidates for the suffrages of the electors were Alexander Baring, esq. Henry Seymour, esq. and John Ashley Warre, esq. The poll commenced on Thursday, March 9th, 1820, and continued for the following fourteen days, Sundays excepted. The progress of this contest, and the unceasing activity with which it was carried on, nearly every vote undergoing the most rigorous investigation as to the qualifications of the elector before the returning officers, except on the last day, will best appear from the following statement of each day’s poll :—

	Baring.	Warre.	Seymour.
First Day, Thursday, March 9th, .... 0 .... 0 .... 0 (occupied in preparatory proceedings.)	0	0	0
Second Day, Friday, .....	43	30	26
Third Day, Saturday, .....	49	39	20
Fourth Day, Monday,.....	13	10	12
Fifth Day, Tuesday,.....	25	20	20
Sixth Day, Wednesday, .....	40	28	29

		<i>Baring.</i>	<i>Warre.</i>	<i>Seymour.</i>
Seventh Day,	Thursday, .....	50	50	27
Eighth Day,	Friday, .....	23	24	17
Ninth Day,	Saturday, .....	64	59	33
Tenth Day,	Monday, .....	2	1	4
Eleventh Day,	Tuesday, .....	10	8	22
Twelfth Day,	Wednesday, .....	25	8	14
Thirteenth Day,	Thursday, .....	18	9	36
Fourteenth Day,	Friday, .....	4	2	12
Fifteenth Day,	Saturday, .....	41	38	49
TOTAL,		407	326	321

‘ At the close of the poll, on the 27th of March, and after the numbers had been declared, Mr. Seymour demanded a scrutiny, to which the returning officers assented. The assizes intervening, the scrutiny was postponed to the 4th of April, when it commenced in the guildhall, before the returning officers and their counsel, and the counsel for the respective candidates, namely, for the returning officers, James Manning, esq. for Mr. Baring, William Adam, esq. for Mr. Warre, Serjeant Pell and C. C. Bompas, esq. and for Mr. Seymour, G. F. Williams and H. A. Merewether, esqrs. On the morning of the third day, April 7th, Mr. Williams stated that Mr. Seymour did not wish to proceed further with the scrutiny ; when, on casting up the numbers, it appeared that Mr. Warre’s majority had increased from five to nine. Mr. Baring and Mr. Warre were then declared duly elected, and returned accordingly.

‘ The number of voters at this election was 631 ;

OF WHOM THERE WERE

For Mr. Seymour, plumpers....	208
— Mr. Baring, plumpers.....	11
— Seymour and Baring .....	88
— Seymour and Warre .....	19
— Baring and Warre .....	305

Rejected votes.....	44
OF WHOM THERE WERE	
For Mr. Seymour, plumpers ....	13
— Mr. Baring, plumpers ....	1
— Seymour and Baring .....	6
— Seymour and Warre .....	1
— Baring and Warre .....	23

*Members of Parliament for Taunton.*

[Compiled from Prynn, Browne Willis, and other Authorities.]

HENRY IV.

1409 Thomas Edward—Thomas Barat.

HENRY V.

1414 John Merchant—Edward Dyere.

1421 John Bowen—Walter Portman.

EDWARD IV.

1466 William Danvers—Robert Ashetill.

1471 William Danvers—Edward Aysheton.

1476 Edward Aysheton—Robert Lovelord.

EDWARD VI.

155 $\frac{2}{3}$  John Mason.

QUEEN MARY.

1553 James Bassett—Jaques Wingfield.

1554 William Barne—Oliver Vachell.

1554 Thomas Eden—John Norrys.

1555 Valentine Dale, LL. D.

1557 Valentine Dale, LL. D.—Richard Myrfield.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

155 $\frac{8}{9}$  Valentine Dale, LL. D.

1563 Miles Sandys—Anthony Leigh.

1571 Robert Hill—Richard Blount.

1572 Roger Hill—Richard Blount.

— Edward Hodges, *vice* R. Blount, deceased.

1585 Maurice Horner—William Goldwell.

1586 Francis Bacon—John Goldwell.

1588 Thomas Fisher—John Goldwell.

1592 William Aubrey, LL. D.—John Davidgc.

1597 Edward Hext—Edward Barker.

1601 Daniel Dunne, LL. D.—John Bond.

**JAMES I.**

- 1603 Sir Edward Hext, knt.—John Bond.  
1614 Sir Maurice Berkeley, knt.  
1620 Thomas Brereton—Lewis Hope.  
1623 Thomas Brereton—Roger Prowse.

**CHARLES I.**

- 1625 Edward Brereton—Sir Hugh Portman, bart.  
1625 Sir Robert Gorges, knt.—George Browne.  
1628 Sir Hugh Portman, bart.—George Browne.  
1640 William Portman—Roger Hill.  
1640 Sir William Portman, bart.—George Searle.  
— John Palmer, *vice* Sir W. Portman, bart.

## INTERREGNUM.

- 1654 Thomas Gorges—John Gorges.  
1656 Robert Blake, (one of the generals at sea)—  
Thomas Gorges.  
1658 Sir William Wyndham, bart.—Thomas Gorges.

## CHARLES II.

- 1660 Thomas Gorges—William Wyndham.  
1661 Sir W. Portman, bart. K. B.—Sir W. Wyndham, bart.  
1678 Sir W. Portman, bart. K. B.—John Trenchard.  
1681 Edmund Prideaux—John Trenchard.

## JAMES II.

- 1685 Sir W. Portman, bart. K. B.—John Sanford.**

## CONVENTION PARLIAMENT.

- 1688 Sir W. Portman, bart. K. B.—John Sanford.**

**WILLIAM III.**

- 1690 John Speke—Edward Clarke.  
1695 John Speke—Edward Clarke.  
1698 Henry Seymour Portman—Edward Clarke.  
1701 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Edward Clarke.

## QUEEN ANNE.

- 1702 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Edward Clarke.  
1705 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Edward Clarke.  
1708 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Edward Clarke.  
1710 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Henry Portman.  
1713 Sir Francis Warre, bart.—Henry Portman.

**GEORGE I.**

- 1714 James Smith—Sir William Pynsent, bart.**

1722 James Smith—John Trenchard.

1725 Abraham Elton, *vice* J. Trenchard, deceased.

GEORGE II.

1727 George Speke—Francis Fane.

1734 H. W. Berkeley Portman—Francis Fane.

1741 Sir John Chapman—John Buck.

1745 Percy Wyndham O'Brien (afterwards Earl of Thomond,) *vice* J. Buck, deceased.

1747 Robert Webb—Sir Charles Wyndham, bart.

1749 William Rowley, *vice* Sir C. Wyndham, succeeded to the Peerage.

1754 Lord Carpenter—John Halliday.

1754 Robert Maxwell, (afterwards Earl of Farnham,) *vice* John Halliday, deceased.

GEORGE III.

1761 Lord Carpenter, (afterwards Earl of Tyrconnel,)—Lord Farnham.

1762 Lawrence Sullivan, *vice* Lord Tyrconnel, deceased.

1768 Alexander Popham—Nathaniel Webb.

1774 Alexander Popham—John Halliday.

1780 General John Roberts—John Halliday.

1782 Benjamin Hammet, *vice* General Roberts, deceased.

1784 Alexander Popham—Benjamin Hammet, who received the honor of knighthood in 1787.

1790 Alexander Popham—Sir Benjamin Hammet.

1796 William Moreland—Sir Benjamin Hammet.

1800 John Hammet, *vice* Sir Benjamin Hammet, deceased.

1802 William Moreland—John Hammet.

1806 John Hammet—Alexander Baring.

1807 John Hammet—Alexander Baring.

1811 Henry Powell Collins, *vice* J. Hammet, deceased.

1812 Alexander Baring—H. P. Collins.

1818 Alexander Baring—Sir William Burroughs, bart.

1819 H. P. Collins, on petition, *vice* Sir W. Burroughs.

GEORGE IV.

1820 Alexander Baring—John Ashley Warre.

## CHAPTER IV.

ON THE TRADE, MANUFACTURES, AND NAVIGATION OF  
TAUNTON—THE WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY—THE SILK  
MANUFACTORY—NAVIGATION OF THE RIVER TONE.

## WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY.

**T**HIS town has been noted for its woollen manufactory, in which it carried on, for a number of years, a very large and extensive business. Its trade may be traced back for four hundred and eighty years, to the reign of Edward III. to whose wise counsels belongs the glory of first bringing the woollen manufactories into this kingdom. Previously to his reign, though England was famous for the growth of wool, it does not appear, that the people knew how to make it into cloths, unless of a very coarse kind, called *friezes*. Our wool was exported to the Netherlands, and enriched that country; which gave occasion to the institution of the order of the "Golden Fleece," by the duke of Burgundy. The king availed himself of the opportunity which offered, through the increasing intercourse between the two countries, in consequence of his marrying the daughter of the earl of Hainault, to send over, without suspicion, emissaries to the Netherlands, to ingratiate themselves with the Flemish manufacturers. Every allurement was thrown out to

this class of men, who, in their own country, earned with hard labour a poor and scanty maintenance, to invite them to transport themselves and their art to England. On the fair prospect of living in a superior style, enjoying a proportional profit of their labour, and forming conjugal connexions with the best families, numbers came over, bringing with them their tools and their trade. Royal protections were granted, to encourage their settlement. One was given by the king, at Lincoln, the 23d of July, 1331, to John Kemp, of Flanders, a weaver; and a like protection was afforded by the king, at Westminster, the 3d of May, 1336, to fifteen weavers, of Zealand, who came here to exercise and teach their art. One, who settled in Gloucestershire, and was peculiarly eminent, as a clothier, had the surname of *Webb* given him by the king.<sup>1</sup>

The persons, who left the Netherlands, coming some from one part, and some from another, made no sensible want of hands in their own country; but,

<sup>1</sup> In 1353 king Edward III. removed the staple of English wool from Flanders, and fixed it in several cities in England, particularly at Westminster. Bristol was one of the first towns in the west, where the woollen manufacture had been encouraged. Some of the Flemings settled at Taunton in 1336. From the person above-mentioned, whom king Edward named *Webb*, a family of the same name, lately resident in Taunton, is supposed to have been descended.

A staple for wool was fixed at Exeter in 1354. West-country plain cloths are first mentioned in the 13th of Richard II. 1390, and their dimensions settled.

From Taunton the woollen manufacture was probably introduced into Tiverton; but notwithstanding the vicinity of these towns, we have no certain account of any progress made in the latter, during the fourteenth century.—*Dunford's Hist. of Tiverton*, p. 28. 29.



collected together here, they formed a great number. It was judged best, in order to prevent, on any discontent, a general resolution of returning, and to diffuse the benefits of their art over the kingdom, to disperse them into different and remote counties, that they might establish, in each, different manufactories. The making of fustians was set up in Norwich; of baize, at Sudbury, in Suffolk; of says and serges, at Colchester, in Essex; of broad cloths, in Kent; of kerseys, in Devonshire; of cloth, in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire; of Welch friezes, in Wales; of cloth, at Kendal, in Westmoreland, and at Halifax, in Yorkshire; of cloth, in Hampshire, Berkshire, and Sussex; and of serges, at Taunton. The manufactory was greatly promoted by the discovery of fuller's earth, of superior quality to any in Europe. A new accession of foreigners, and the advancement of the woollen trade in England, were the consequences, in another period, of the cruelties of the duke of Alva; whose tyranny drove over more Flemings to settle in this country.<sup>1</sup>

The woollen manufactory, since it was introduced and established in this country, and has become the staple trade of the kingdom, has suffered great changes and fluctuations. The wars of the emperor Charles V. occasioned, in the reign of Henry VIII. a great stagnation of trade. The merchants could not venture into Spain for nearly a year; and the goods, sent from the different counties, to Blackwell-hall, for sale, found no vent: few or no merchants were disposed to pur-

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Regia*; or an Account of the Treaties in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i. 8vo. p. 195, and Fuller's *Church History*, b. iii. p. 111, 112.

chase, their warehouses being filled with cloths lying on hand. The labourers, of consequence, were thrown out of employ; and great discontents arose, especially in Suffolk, where they would have fallen into some riotous acts, if the duke of Norfolk had not wisely appeased them. The merchants were summoned to appear before Cardinal Wolsey, who, in the name of the king, reprimanded them in an angry tone, for not purchasing the goods brought to market; and threatened them, that his majesty would open a new mart at Whitehall, buy of the clothiers, and sell again to foreign merchants. To which menace one of them pertinently replied; "My lord, the king may buy them as well at Blackwell-hall, if it please him, and the strangers will gladlier receive them there, than at Westminster." "You shall not order that matter," said the cardinal; "and I shall first send into London, to know what cloths you have in your hands, and that done, the king and his counsel shall appoint who shall buy the cloths, I warrant you." With this answer the Londoners departed.<sup>1</sup>

After this, the woollen manufactory revived<sup>2</sup>, and

<sup>1</sup> Grafton's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 1167, 68.

<sup>2</sup> It may be inferred that the trade of Taunton was in a very flourishing state, so as to rank with that of Bristol, in the time of Edward VI. for when lord Russell, in a rebellion of the people of Cornwall and Devon, was quite dispirited, because he had not received the expected supplies for suppressing it from the court, three merchants of Exeter, Prestwood, Bodlie, and Periam, assisted him with such a sum of money, borrowed on their credit from the merchants of Bristol, Lyme, and TAUNTON, as quite dispelled his lordship's heaviness.—*Fuller's Church History*.—*History of Exeter*, p. 89.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.*

the trade between England and the Netherlands (if we may believe Camden) amounted, in his time, to above twelve millions of gold ducats. But, in 1564, it was almost entirely sunk. This was owing to the artifice of Cardinal Granville, who had persuaded the governess of the Netherlands to prohibit the importation of English cloth. This led the English to settle a cloth staple at Embden, in East Friesland. But, by the influence and management of a new ambassador from Spain, the two nations were reconciled; and it was agreed, that the treaty of commerce, made in the time of Maximilian I. called *intercursus magnus*, should be observed on both sides.<sup>1</sup>

New encouragement and support were afforded to the woollen manufactory, in 1622, by a commission, which passed the 21st of October, for re-establishing it.<sup>2</sup> But the sources of commerce lie deeper than in the language and promises of acts of state, and national ordinances; and must be sought in the wants of mankind, and the freedom of their mutual intercourse.<sup>3</sup>

Some years after this, the war with Spain, breaking out in 1655, operated greatly to the disadvantage of the woollen trade. Before this, we find, that Taunton serges were in great reputation and demand, as fashionable wearing, being lighter than cloth, and yet thicker than many other stuffs. But such was the effect of that war, that "trade," says my author,

<sup>1</sup> Acta Regia, vol. iv. p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Acta Regia, vol. iv. p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> In the 4th of James I. chap. 2. "An Act for the true making of woollen cloth" mentions broad cloths, commonly called *Tauntons*, *Bridgwaters*, and *Dunsters*.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.*

“ long since complained of to be dead, is now lamented generally as buried, though hereafter it may have a resurrection.”

This hope was afterwards realized ; for trade revived, and was carried to a great extent, after our civil distractions were composed. William III. gave his utmost countenance to every undertaking that promised its advancement : several amendments were made, and many useful manufactories were established.<sup>2</sup> By the year 1704, trade arose in Taunton to a very flourishing height ; for we are told, that eight thousand five hundred persons were weekly employed in making its cloths.<sup>3</sup> The population of this town, about that period, was so great and rapid, that it was called the nursery for queen Anne’s wars ; but the number of its inhabitants would scarcely have been so considerable, had not the state of trade been prosperous.

The circumstance, which gave Taunton the advantage in point of manufactory, invited clothiers to settle in it, and drew on it the envy of other towns, was the peculiar tenure of its estates. For every mortgage being entered in the Castle books, which was a security against frauds, money could be borrowed there, above a hundred and thirty years ago, at five pounds per cent.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Fuller’s Worthies of England, p. 18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Gee on Trade and Navigation ; a new edition, 1767, p. 30, 31.

<sup>4</sup> Chamberlayne’s Present State of England, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Yarranton’s England’s Improvement, by Sea and Land, 1677.

“ The manor of Taunton-Dean, in Somersetshire,” says this author, “ is under a register, and there the land is worth 23 years’ purchase, although but a copyhold manor ; and, at any time, he, that hath 100 pounds a year in the manor of Taunton, may go to the castle

Since this, the manufactory hath undergone great changes ; of this the different sums, with which the receivers for the county, at different periods, contracted to supply the town weekly, afford a proof. From 1727 to 1734, the cash delivered, on contract, to the tradesmen, for bills of exchange, amounted to one thousand five hundred pounds per week ; and the trade seldom produced, at the same time, less than five hundred moidores, (six hundred and seventy-five pounds,) from Falmouth. For ten years, from 1734 to 1744, there was not more than about three hundred pounds in cash delivered weekly ; and for the next seven years, from 1744 to 1751, it did not amount to more than two hundred pounds per week.\*

and take up 2000 pounds upon his lands, and buy stuffs with the money, and go to London and sell his stuffs, and return down his moneys, and pay but five pounds in the hundred for his moneys, and discharge his lands. This is the cause of the great trade and riches about Taunton-Dean. (O happy Taunton-Dean ! ) What gentleman can do thus with free-lands ? No, it is not worth sixteen years' purchase all England over, one place with another ; and, if not timely put under a register, it will come to twelve years' purchase before long." P. 27, and also p. 31, 34, 100, 109. T.

\* In the Gentleman's Magazine for March 1743, p. 139, 141, there is a paper copied from "The Champion" of the 3d of that month, entitled "The Cries of the Woollen Manufacturers in the West, particularly in Somersetshire and Devon, with the lamentable consequences of them. From the Vale of Taunton, between Taunton and Exeter."

It may be concluded, that at that time the woollen trade was peculiarly dull ; but there is nothing in this paper that applies particularly to the state of it in Taunton. The discouragements, which it states as affecting the manufacturers, are general, not local ; such as the smuggling of wool to foreign parts ; the practice of truck, first, from the merchant to the serge-maker, and from the maker to

The woollen manufactory of Taunton is now reduced to a low ebb, whilst in other places, and in the north particularly, it has greatly flourished. There is not at present, (1821) it is believed, more than ten or twelve looms employed in this trade, and not above six or eight persons as woolcombers. The decay of it here must therefore be sought in causes that have had a local operation. Contested elections, by no means friendly to industry, it is highly probable, have proved particularly prejudicial to a trade, which, at times, could admit of no delay, in the execution of orders for goods, that must be ready for the sailing of ships, and the seasons of foreign fairs. The mischief of their influence, in this respect, was particularly felt in the continued and violent opposition of the year 1754. The demand for its goods was then great; but through the idleness and drunkenness of the season, it could not be answered. The orders, being returned to the merchants, were sent, for execution, to other towns; with which the intercourse, thus opened, was continued. The high price of labour, affixed to some particular articles, at the first invention, though then an encouragement to ingenuity and industry,

all underworkers; the tax upon soap and candles; the ladies not wearing articles of woollen manufacture more than they did; the gentlemen of the court buying their clothes in France; the denial of letters of marque, and delay of convoys for the merchant ships; and the prohibition of Spanish wool. One discouragement indeed was local, but that related to Tiverton only, which arose from the receivership of the land-tax being given to a serge-maker, through corporation interest, who, having so much public money lying in his hands, forestalled the markets, and could undersell all other tradesmen.

eventually has operated to the general detriment of trade. It furnished some of the more careful and provident labourers with the means of becoming manufacturers themselves, and of setting up looms in their own houses. The number of competitors was thus greatly multiplied, who not having capitals, that would enable them to give credit, and to carry on business with ease, were obliged, by abatements on the price, to procure a speedy return for their goods. The value of the articles being thus reduced at market, a reduction of wages necessarily followed. This could not be effected without warm struggles between the different classes of manufacturers; nor, when carried, without bringing on a deterioration of the quality of the goods, which must sink their estimation in foreign markets. The taste of those markets has also changed, and a preference, at them, is given to woollen goods of a different kind; or to the various articles of the cotton manufactory. But the decline of the woollen trade of Taunton must be also ascribed, in a great degree, to the advantages, which the manufacturers in the north have derived over us, from the introduction and use of spinning machines; which would have been peculiarly useful here, not only to secure the exact and true execution of this part of the trade, but to supply the want of hands for conducting it, which, for a number of years, was very sensibly felt.

To these causes, it is conceived, may be traced the decline of the woollen manufacture in this town. It is, however, a pleasure to those, who feel an attachment to its interest, to reflect, that though that trade has greatly declined, the town has not wholly lost its weight and importance as a town of trade.

## THE SILK MANUFACTORY.

Among other sources of employment for the poor, and as causes giving a new and increased, though a different motion to the springs of trade in this town, must be mentioned the erection of silk mills, and the introduction of silk-weaving.

The art of making fine *Italian organzine*, or thrown silk, out of fine raw silk, which was formerly bought with our money, ready wrought in Italy, was first discovered with the utmost difficulty and hazard, and introduced into this kingdom by sir Thomas Lombe. The brother of this gentleman, whose head was well turned for mechanics, supported by sir Thomas's fortune, went to Savoy, to make a discovery of the structure of a large and curious machine there, by which all the organzine silk was made, and which was guarded with the utmost jealousy from the knowledge and inspection of other nations; for the king of Sardinia made it death to discover the invention, or to attempt to carry it out of his dominions. Mr. Lombe, after a long stay and great expense in that country, formed means to see this engine so often, and to pry into the nature of it so narrowly, that he made himself master of its structure, and of all the different parts and motions belonging to it. After his return to England, Sir Thomas Lombe, under the protection of a royal patent, in 1718, erected a machine on the same plan, at Derby. It was three years in building, and contained twenty-six thousand five hundred and eighty six wheels, and ninety-seven thousand seven hundred and forty-six movements. A water-wheel gave motion to all the other wheels and movements,



of which any one might be stopped separately. This wheel went round three times in one minute, and worked, every time, seventy-three thousand seven hundred and twenty-six yards of silk thread. One fire-engine conveyed warm air to every part of the machine, and one regulator governed the whole work.

The whole term of fourteen years, for which the patent was granted, through the various difficulties attending so new and great an undertaking, was almost expired, before the manufactory could be brought to perfection. On this account, on January the 28th, 1732, Sir Thomas Lombe applied to parliament to take his case into consideration, and to grant him a further term of years for the sole making and using the said engines, or such other recompense as to the house should seem meet.

To prolong the term, or to grant a new term, was considered as a measure which would invest the patentee with a power to disturb all other inventions, any way resembling his own, and prevent the nation's making any benefit of his invention. A bill, therefore, for granting fourteen thousand pounds to sir Thomas Lombe, as a recompense for his introducing the machine for working Italian organzine, passed, and received the royal assent, the 3d of April, 1732.

‘Hutton, in his History of Derby, gives a somewhat different account of the introduction of this machine, and of the machine itself:—

“The Italians had the exclusive art of silk-throwing, and consequently the absolute command of that lucrative traffic. The wear of silks was the taste of the ladies; and the British merchant was obliged to apply to the Italian, with ready money, for the article, at an exorbitant price.

"John Lombe, a man of spirit, a good draughts-man, and an excellent mechanic, travelled into Italy, with a view of obtaining the secret. By perseverance and bribery he acquired the whole; when his plot being discovered, he fled, with the utmost precipitation, on board a ship, at the hazard of his life, taking with him two natives, who had favoured his interest and his life, at the risk of their own.

"Arriving safely with his acquired knowledge, he fixed upon Derby as a proper place for his purpose, where he erected the present works.

"Being established to his wish, he procured, in 1718, a patent from the crown, to secure the profits during fourteen years. Mr. Lombe soon after died, as was supposed by poison, administered by an Italian woman, sent over for the purpose of destroying him. He died a bachelor, and his property fell into the hands of his brother, William, who only lived a short time. These works then became the property of his cousin, Sir Thomas Lombe. This was about 1726.

"In 1732 the patent expired; when Sir Thomas petitioned parliament for a renewal, pleading that "the works had taken a long time in perfecting, and the people in teaching, and that there had been none to acquire emolument from the patent." But he omitted to inform them that he had already accumulated more than eighty thousand pounds by means of his machinery.

"Government, willing to spread so useful an invention, gave Sir Thomas fourteen thousand pounds, to suffer the trade to be laid open, and a model of the works taken, which was for many years kept in the Tower, and considered a great curiosity."

"Hutton says "the number of wheels in Sir Thomas Lombe's machine is thirteen thousand three hundred and eighty-four. The movements (an indefinite word,) will bear a large deduction. What number of yards are wound every revolution of the wheel no man can tell, nor is the number open to calculation. The wheel revolves about twice in a minute. The *superb fire-engine*, which blazes in description, was only a common stove, that warmed one corner of the large building. The regulator is a peg in the master-wheel, which strikes a small bell every revolution: near it is a pendulum that vibrates about fifty times in a minute. Twenty-four vibrations of the pendulum is the medium velocity of the wheel.

“Although there are a great number of parts, any one of which may be stopped, and separated at pleasure, yet the whole, extending through five large rooms, is *one* regular machine, which moves and stops together. Every minute part is attended with two wheels, *one* of which turns the other. If two are separated, the last stops of course, while the former moves gently on.

“The raw silk is brought in hanks, or skains, called slips, and would take five or six days in winding off, though kept moving ten hours a day. Some are the produce of Persia; others of Canton, coarse, and in small slips; some from Piedmont, of a yellowish colour; and some from China, perfectly white. The work passes through three different engines; one to wind; the second to twist; and the third to double. Although the thread is fine, it is an accumulation of many fibres. The workman's care is chiefly to unite, by a knot, a thread that breaks; to take out the burs and uneven parts, some of which are little bags, fabricated by the silk-worm as a grave for itself, when nature inspires the instinct of preparing for death. The bags are neatly closed up, and hung to a thread, as the last effort towards its own funeral. They generally moulder to a darkish dust; sometimes they are totally gone; but Mr. Hutton says he has frequently taken them out alive. The threads are continually breaking; and to tie them is principally the business of children, whose fingers are nimble. The machine continually turns a round bobbin, or small block of wood, which draws the thread from the slip, while expanded upon a swift, suspended on a centre. The moment the thread breaks, the swift stops. One person commands from twenty to sixty threads. If many cease, at the same time, to turn, it amounts to a fault.”

The act of parliament for granting a recompense to sir Thomas Lombe left the way open for ingenuity and industry to avail themselves of the invention, and to erect similar works in other parts of the kingdom; which was done at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and at other towns. In 1781, Messrs. Vansommer and Paul, silk-merciers, in Pall-mall, London, purchased of Mr. Noble, of Taunton, a large brew-house and the adjoining premises, situated in Upper High-street; and of

**Mr. Pounsbery, baker, a right to use the water of the contiguous mills. Here they erected a large building, within which extensive machinery was placed, with suitable wheels, for making thrown silk out of fine raw silk, on the model of that at Derby. In 1783, Mr. Wilmot, the proprietor of a similar silk mill at Sherborne, and Mr. John Norman, of Taunton, purchased, of the assignees of Messrs. Vansommer and Paul, this machine, and the premises on which it was erected; and continued to work it, in partnership, till the death of Mr. Wilmot, in 1787; after which time it became the sole property and concern of Mr. Norman, and is now (1821) the property of his son, Samuel Norman, of Wilton, Esq. It is an advantage belonging to such works, that they employ a number of hands, and of children from a very early period of life. The machine, of which we are speaking, generally supplies with labour from sixty to eighty persons.**

**Mr. Vansommer was not disheartened by the unfortunate circumstances which obliged him to relinquish his first undertaking. In 1781, he purchased some new buildings in Canon-street, and converted them into houses, for carrying on the different branches of the silk manufactory; which afterwards became the property of Mr. John James, of London. These works consisted of machinery, on a small scale, for throwing silk, which was set in motion by a woman treading the large wheel; and of thirty-two looms for weaving. Mr. James employed here about sixty persons in the manufacture of Barcelona handkerchiefs, tiffanies, Canterbury muslins, modes, florentines, and ladies' shawls. This establishment continued in some activity for ten or twelve years, and was then given up.**

‘It was in 1778 that the weaving of silk was first introduced into Taunton, by Messrs. Forbes and Wasdale, and the manufacture carried forward by them upon a small scale. In 1795, Mr. Leney Smith, of London, was induced by sir Benjamin Hammet to commence here the weaving of crape; and about the year 1806, the silk manufactory was much augmented by Mr. Every. It has been constantly increasing since that period, and is now carried on, upon an extensive scale, by Messrs. Ingleby, Jones, and Co. of Wood-street, London; and by Messrs. Stokes, Meat, and Parsons, of Gutter-lane, Cheapside, London. The principal articles which are manufactured at Taunton are crapes, persians, sarsnets, and different sorts of mixed goods, figured and plain. The gentlemen concerned in this trade have lately made great improvements in the variety and beauty of the several fabrics. The number of looms employed amounts to about eight hundred in Taunton, and two hundred in the vicinity. There are about one thousand persons engaged in weaving, one hundred as winders, and two hundred as quillers. The throwing mills employ about five hundred persons; making, in the whole, about one thousand eight hundred persons.

‘The throwing mills are those of Mr. Norman, in Upper High-street; of Messrs. Balance and Co. in Eastreach, Taunton; of Mr. Blinkhorn, at Staple-grove; and of Mr. Swift, at Preston, near Milverton.

It may be reckoned an advantage, which the town of Taunton has gained in point of trade, that besides the establishment of such works, it is become, of late years, much the resort of persons of independent fortune; great part of which, as far as concerns the

necessary articles of life, must be expended in the town and its neighbourhood, and occasion a considerable circulation of cash, notwithstanding the ungenerous, if not mistaken, economy, which prevails, not only here, but in several other places, of purchasing many articles in the metropolis, to the discouragement and injury of home exertions and industry. The accession of genteel families to the town is much owing to the modern improvements, in various respects, which have taken place, and which will be described in another chapter.

#### NAVIGATION OF THE RIVER TONE.

The first, who formed the public-spirited scheme of rendering the river Tone navigable, was John Malet, of Enmore, esq. the last heir male of an ancient baronial family in this county, of whom Thomas Malet, esq. was sheriff of Somersetshire in the 18th of queen Elizabeth. In the 13th of king Charles the first, a commission, under the great seal, was granted to John Coventry, esq. and other gentlemen, to treat and compound with all the owners of mills, lands, and tenements, that compensation might be made for such parts of their property near the river, as Mr. Malet would want for making the river navigable from Bridgwater to Taunton, and from thence to Bradford bridge. The work was undertaken at the sole expense of Mr. Malet, and all persons concerned were satisfied out of his estate. A warrant, to be afterwards passed into a patent, was also granted by the king, to secure to this gentleman the quiet enjoyment of the navigation which he had effected. Mr. Malet, at his death, left an only daughter, Elizabeth, married

to John Wilmot, the celebrated and last earl of Rochester, of that family, to whom she carried the great estate of the Malets. This lady had issue three daughters, Anne Wilmot, afterwards married to the Hon. Francis Greville, son and heir apparent of Fulke lord Brooke; Elizabeth Wilmot, afterwards countess of Sandwich; and Malet Wilmot, who became viscountess Lisburne. The warrant, which had been granted to the grandfather of these ladies, having by some neglect, or otherwise, miscarried, they obtained from king Charles II. while they were unmarried, letters patent, dated the 6th day of November, in the 36th year of his reign, granting to them, their heirs and assigns, to their own use, without any account whatsoever, the sole navigation of the said river, as far as Ham Mills, and no farther; and the full benefit and advantage thereof in the most ample manner.

In the year 1698, some gentlemen of the town of Taunton, to the number of thirty, formed the useful scheme of making and completing the navigation of the river Tone from Bridgwater to Ham Mills, and from thence to the town of Taunton; and entered into a mutual agreement to apply for an act of parliament to effect the same, and to purchase of the countess of Sandwich, the viscountess Lisburne, and the lady Anne Greville, all their rights in the navigation of the river. A transfer of them was accordingly made by these ladies and their husbands, by a deed, bearing date the 4th of March, in the 10th year of the reign of king William, to John Friend, gentleman, in trust, who was one of those that engaged in this undertaking. The sum of three hundred and thirty pounds was paid for this purchase.

In the parliament of the 10th and 11th years of king William the third, an act was passed for the improvement of the navigation of this river. The preamble of this act recites, That John Malet, esq. in pursuance of a commission from king Charles I. in the 13th year of his reign, made the river Tone in some sort navigable from Bridgwater, in the county of Somerset, to Ham-mills, in the said county; in consideration whereof, king Charles II. by letters patent, dated in the 36th year of his reign, granted to the heirs of the said John Malet the sole navigation of that part of the said river; and that all the interest of the said John Malet and his heirs therein is conveyed and assigned to John Friend, Thomas Baker, Christopher Cook, Francis Hobart, Charles Totterdell, Jedidiah Safford, James Reed, Thomas Mundy, Arthur Towill, Thomas Westcombe, jun. Benjamin Risdon, Thomas Whinnell, Samuel Peacock, John Amory, Peter Aphin, John Gray, Matthew Warren, Francis Newton, William Smith, Thomas Gunston, Joseph Helliard, Thomas Ford, Joseph Way, Maurice Hamond, Robert Webb, William Willner, John Foy, John Kirkpatrick, Thomas Purkis, and Thomas Butler, inhabitants of the parishes of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalen, Taunton Saint James, Bishop's-Hull, or Wilton, in the said county, who have purchased the same, and who are willing at their own expense, until they can be repaid, to keep the said river navigable.

It is then enacted, that the said John Friend, Thomas Baker, &c. &c. and their successors, shall be conservators of the said river Tone, and, by themselves or agents, may cleanse and keep the same navigable from



Bridgwater to Ham-mills, and thence to the town of Taunton ; and for that purpose may dig the ground near adjoining, and remove any thing that may be an impediment to the said passage ; and may cut a new channel, if occasion be, through any ground, making recompense for the same ; and may cut any other stream for making the said river navigable, and build bridges, wharfs, locks, wears, turnpikes, or other works in or near the same, and bring, lay, and work all materials requisite thereunto, and make a path or way on the sides of the said river, for watermen, boat, or bargemen, or others.

It is further enacted, that the said conservators, or the major part of them, before they meddle with any person's land or inheritance, shall agree with the owners for the loss or damage they may receive thereby ; and if they cannot agree on the value, or if the title is in an infant, feme-covert, ecclesiastical person, or corporation, the sheriff of the county, within thirty days after such request made by the said conservators in writing, and at their charge, by a jury of twenty-four disinterested persons, and examining witnesses upon oath, and hearing the parties interested, (if they appear,) may order in writing, after public notice set up at the market-cross in Taunton, and left with the occupiers of the said lands, twenty days before such inquiry, what satisfaction such owner or tenant shall have, and the same shall 'be binding to all parties ; which agreement of the parties interested, or determination of the jury, or major part of them, being put in writing under the hands and seals of the conservators, or major part of them, and the proprietors, or of the jury, or major part of them, within four days after the

making thereof, shall be enrolled among the records of the sessions of the peace for the county of Somerset : and then, upon payment of the money, or a tender according to the act, the conservators may enter on the said lands, and do any act pursuant to such agreement or order. And the better to ascertain the value of such land, the jury shall and may summon any persons before them, as often as it shall be necessary, as well interested as others, and take their information on oath, and thereupon order in writing on parchment, under hand and seal, what satisfaction shall be made ; which determination shall be good, notwithstanding the absence of the parties interested, or their not being heard.

It is also further enacted, that for reimbursing the conservators the principal money of the said purchase, and what they shall lay out in making and keeping the said river navigable, &c. with interest, at six per cent. per annum, till they shall be repaid ; every boat, barge, or vessel, that shall pass up the said river, from Bridgwater, or other part thereof, towards Ham-mills, shall pay, to the use of the said conservators, a toll of not above four-pence for every weigh of coals so carried, of forty-eight bushels Bridgwater measure, which is equal to two chaldrons, or seventy-two bushels Winchester measure, and two-pence for every ton of other goods, as often as they shall so pass, and so proportionably for a greater or less quantity, to be paid and received at Knap-bridge or bridges, with power to the said conservators, for non-payment, to detain such vessel with its apparel, tackle, and lading, till the said toll be paid. And every boat, barge, or vessel,

passing from the said Ham-mills, or other part of the said river, towards Taunton, shall pay at the first or lowermost lock on the said river, above the place (near the said Ham-mills) called Coal-harbour, a further toll not exceeding four shillings for every weigh of coals so carried, and two shillings for every ton of other goods, as often as they shall so pass through such lock, and so proportionably for a greater or less quantity, with the like power for non-payment to detain such vessel as aforesaid, till the toll be paid.

It is also further enacted, that every vessel that shall pass down the said river from Taunton, or other part of the said river, towards Bridgwater, shall pay a toll not exceeding twelve-pence per ton for the goods, &c. at the first or uppermost lock next the said town of Taunton, with like power for non-payment as aforesaid. And after the said conservators have been re-imburshed their principal and interest for the said purchase, and making and keeping the said river navigable from Ham-mills to Taunton, and perfecting the navigableness thereof from Bridgwater to Ham-mills, then but one penny for every weigh of coals, and one penny for every ton of goods, &c. passing between Ham-mills and Bridgwater, to be paid at Knap-bridge or bridges aforesaid, and but one shilling for every weigh of coals, and six-pence for every ton of goods, &c. passing between Ham-mills and Taunton, to be paid at the first or lowermost lock above Coal-harbour aforesaid. The said tolls, and all gifts and grants to the said conservators, to be applied to the repairing the bridges, wears, turnpikes, ways, and passage for hauling boats, &c. made by the conservators, and be accounted for,

and the surplus disposed of to the use of the poor of Taunton, and of the parishes of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalen, and Taunton Saint James aforesaid, in building one or more hospitals, or otherwise for the poor children of the said places, to be governed by the said conservators ; their rules being first approved of, by one or both of the judges of assize and Nisi Prius, for the county of Somerset.

• It is also further enacted, that watermen, boatmen, bargemen, and others, may use winches, ropes, &c. to draw up vessels through the said river, with men or horses going on the banks thereof.

• And it is further enacted, that a true account of all expenses and charges of the conservators, and of the money received by them, on account of the said river, shall be entered in a book, to be kept by the said conservators, and brought every year, with the vouchers, before the bishop of Bath and Wells, and five of the justices of the said county, at Taunton, or within ten miles thereof, there to be stated and allowed, and the surplus to be distributed among the conservators, their executors, &c. in proportion to the money advanced by them, first in discharge of interest, and next of the principal, till the whole be discharged ; each year to be made up to the 24th of June inclusive, and the distribution thereupon to be at the next general quarter-sessions. And the said bishop and justices may examine the said receipts and disbursements upon oath, and, being stated and allowed, shall transmit a duplicate thereof, under their hands and seals, to be kept amongst the records of the said sessions of the peace.

And it is further enacted, that there shall always be

conservators of the said river, and the said John Friend, Thomas Baker, &c. are hereby constituted conservators of the said river Tone during their lives, unless removed for misbehaviour by the major part of the said conservators. And when the number shall be reduced to twenty, the surviving conservators, after six days public notice in Taunton, shall make up the number thirty. And the conservators are enabled to receive any gift, legacy, or grant, for the uses aforesaid, without licence of alienation in mortmain. And any five of the conservators, being appointed a committee, may make contracts or leases under their hands and seals, which shall be good and binding. And the said conservators may sue and be sued on such contracts, by the name of the conservators of the river Tone, in the county of Somerset, and may appoint servants and officers to manage their estates, and receivers of the said duties, and a cashier or treasurer, and change the same at their pleasure, and appoint them their salary or wages, subject to the correction of the said bishop and justices, at their first meeting after such appointment. And the said conservators are to be diligent in the affair, and at their public meetings (not being less than the major part of the whole number then living) may execute the powers placed in them.

And it is further enacted by the said act, that persons prosecuted for any thing done in pursuance of this act may plead the general issue, and give this act and the special matter in evidence; and if upon the trial a verdict pass for the defendant, or the plaintiff be nonsuited, the defendant shall have double costs. And this act shall be taken in all courts, as a public act,

not requiring special pleading. And all mayors, justices, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, &c. are to be aiding and assisting to the said conservators, their officers, &c. in the execution of this act.

The justices of the peace for the county of Somerset, at the quarter-sessions, held at Bridgwater, in the year 1710, made an order, "that any trader on the river Tone should be at liberty, from time to time, and at convenient and seasonable times, to view and inspect the accounts of the conservators; and that any conservator, to whom application should be made by any trader for this purpose, should direct him to the proper officer keeping such accounts."

The tolls appointed under this act, and the powers which it invested in the conservators, did not prove so efficient as was expected. The amount of the money expended on the scheme, to the 24th of June, 1707, together with the interest, was the sum of three thousand five hundred, and fifty-six pounds, nine shillings, and five-pence farthing. Yet their undertaking, so far from being productive, was not completed: the river was not navigable in the winter, much less in the summer, for want of a lock, or half-lock, at a place called Round Island, and removing a shoal, called Broad Shoal. In consequence of this state of things, a petition was presented to parliament for the purpose of obtaining another act, to enable the conservators to enlarge and improve the navigation of the river, and to increase the tolls. In this application, though it met with great opposition, they were supported by petitions, sanctioning their case and request, from the justices of the peace at the quarter-sessions for the county, from

the corporation of Bridgwater, from the principal inhabitants of both the parishes in Taunton, of the towns of Chard, Ilminster, Wellington, Milverton, Wiveliscombe, Langport, Collumpton, and Tiverton. The petition was acceded to, and a second act, to secure the proposed objects of it, was passed in the 6th year of the reign of queen Anne. So that at present, barges of about fifteen tons each, laden with coals, and other heavy goods and merchandize, shipped for Bridgwater from Bristol, and other ports, are brought quite home to North-town bridge.

The preamble to this act recapitulates the first act, so far as relates to the tolls it enacted, and the application of them; and states the objects of the new bill, namely, a power to erect a lock, or half-lock, at Knap-bridge, near Round Island, to cleanse, dig, and deepen a certain shoal, called Broad Shoal, and to levy additional tolls to defray the expenses of these new works. The act, accordingly, authorizes the conservators to execute these works; and from the building or erecting of the said lock, or half-lock, it appoints them to receive, at the same, an additional toll of one shilling for every weigh of coals, and of six-pence on every ton of goods contained in any boat or vessel, that shall pass through the said lock, or half-lock, and so in proportion for greater or less quantities; which tolls, after the conservators shall be reimbursed their principal money and interest, shall be reduced to two-pence on every weigh of coals, and one penny on every ton of goods. The tolls to be received at Coal-harbour, which before were left, in a degree, to the discretion of the conservators, were, by this act, fixed at two

shillings and eight-pence for every weigh of coals, and one shilling and six-pence for every ton of goods.

This act also, in order to remedy certain disputes and controversies that had arisen on the construction of the former, relative to liberty granted to boatmen, &c. of going on the banks and grounds near the river, to haul up boats, &c. enacts, that it shall not be lawful for them to do this, till a path shall be set out for that purpose by the conservators, and satisfaction shall be made to the owners of the land.

But notwithstanding the aids afforded by this act of parliament, the undertaking did not prove productive until the year 1717 ; when the debt on the river, including the interest at six per cent. on the money expended, amounted to the sum of five thousand, six hundred, and ninety-seven pounds, eight shillings, and ten-pence ; and on this sum, the dividends, ever since that time, have been made.

When the affairs of the conservators were, apparently, placed on a firm footing, and they began to reap some advantage from that useful scheme, they met with an unfriendly opposition to the enjoyment of the fruits of their expenses and exertions. It had been originally included in their plan, and enacted by the first act, as appears by the abstract before, that when the tolls should prove sufficient to discharge all the principal and interest of the money advanced to make the river navigable, then the produce should be applied to the support of a charity school.

On the ground of this provision, Mr. James Dare, of Taunton, goldsmith, exhibited a petition in 1734, to the commissioners for charitable uses for the county.



of Somerset, setting forth, that the conservators of the river Tone had been paid the principal money, and interest, by them disbursed, for making the said river navigable. In consequence of this petition, a decree was made by Thomas Carew, esq. and other commissioners for charitable uses, against the conservators. To this decree the conservators made an appeal. The effect of the decree was, that for four years, while the affair was pending in Chancery, the justices at the quarter-sessions suspended the allowing and signing of the accounts of the conservators, till July, 1737, when, by an order of the high court of Chancery, the decree had been reversed. This order gave a legal authority to the proceedings of the conservators, and afforded an honourable testimony to the truth and integrity of their accounts,

The following account of this decree is extracted from the "Report of the Commissioners for inquiring into the present state of Charities" in the county of Somerset, and printed by order of the House of Commons, 1821.

"It appears that by a decree of the commissioners, in virtue of a commission under the statute of charitable uses, passed in the 43d of Elizabeth, dated the 5th day of August, 1734, and which decree was dated the 21st day of June, 1735, it was adjudged and decreed, that the said conservators having illegally entered and charged, in their books of account of the receipts and disbursements in relation to the making and keeping the said river navigable, several exorbitant, unnecessary, and unwarrantable charges, by means whereof the charity intended and enacted by

the said two acts of parliament, for the benefit of the said poor of Taunton, was, and had been long protracted and delayed ; and particularly in that the said conservators had, in the progress of their said accounts, charged the tolls of the said river Tone to be debtor unto them the said conservators, in the sum of four thousand and eighty-seven pounds, three shillings, and ten-pence, as and for the interest, and interest upon interest, of the sum of one thousand and forty-seven pounds, and twenty pounds eight shillings ; which sum of twenty pounds eight shillings appeared to be unduly charged, and the said sum of one thousand and forty-seven pounds to be only interest due for a former sum by them expended in making and keeping the said river navigable ; and also in that the said conservators had, in the year 1708, charged the said river debtor in the sum of five hundred and twenty-eight pounds, fifteen shillings, and eleven pence, as and for the costs and expenses of obtaining the said act of parliament of the 6th of queen Anne, and likewise with interest upon interest for the same sum, home to the time of making up their last accounts, to wit, the 24th day of June then last past ; which, with the said interest thereof, as the said commissioners computed the same, amounted to two thousand, five hundred, and forty-five pounds, ten shillings, and six-pence ; and farther in that the said conservators had in their said accounts charged the said river debtor in one hundred and twenty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and one penny, for monies paid to the sheriffs and juries, and treating and entertaining them, and drinking themselves, and other such unjust, unnecessary expenses, as in their said accounts were

mentioned and specified, and were found by the said inquisition therein recited; which said sums of four thousand and eighty-seven pounds, three shillings, and ten-pence—two thousand, five hundred, and forty-five pounds, ten shillings, and six-pence—and one hundred and twenty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and one penny, being added together, make the sum of six thousand, seven hundred, and fifty-six pounds, five shillings, and five-pence; which being deducted from the sum of seven thousand, one hundred, and thirty-one pounds, fifteen shillings, and two-pence, being the sum pretended or charged by the said conservators to be the balance of their last accounts, home to the 24th day of June then last past, would, as the said commissioners computed the same, reduce such balance to three hundred, and seventy-five pounds, nine shillings, and nine-pence, but in regard the said conservators must have been at some considerable necessary expenses, in obtaining the said last-mentioned act of parliament, they, the said commissioners, did think fit to allow them three hundred pounds for the same, which they adjudged to be a sufficient sum for that purpose; which, with the simple interest for the same, which they also thought fit to allow, made, as they computed the same, one thousand, one hundred, and forty-three pounds, nine shillings, and nine-pence; which said sum of one thousand, one hundred, and forty-three pounds, nine shillings, and nine-pence, they, the said commissioners, adjudged and decreed to be the just, true, and only balance of accounts due to the said conservators from the said river, or the tolls or duties thereof, on the said 24th day of June then last past, and that the said river

Tone, or the tolls and duties arising thereupon, should be accountable or answerable to the said conservators for no more or otherwise.

“And it was farther adjudged, ordered, and decreed, that after deducting the current necessary expenses of keeping the said river navigable, and collecting the said tolls, the said conservators should, on making up their yearly accounts every year, pay off and discharge the interest of the then preceding year’s balance of accounts, and forthwith, from time to time, apply and pay the overplus of the preceding year’s revenues of the said river towards the sinking such principal balance, until the whole should be discharged; and from that time apply and employ all the future revenues, tolls, and duties, arising from the said river, or the navigation thereof, in and about the charitable uses, and in such manner as by the said acts of parliament, or either of them, was enacted and directed.

“By another act of 44th George III. it is provided, that after the conservators should be reimbursed their principal monies and interest, then the tolls should be reduced as therein mentioned; and it was thereby directed, that the clause of the former act, respecting auditing the accounts, should be repealed, and instead of the powers thereby given, the accounts of the conservators, and the vouchers for the same, if and when required by the said bishop of Bath and Wells, or any five of the said justices without the said bishop, should be brought before the said bishop and justices, or any five of the said justices without the said bishop, between the first of August and the next general quarter-sessions of the peace, to be held in and for the said county, at such place as by the said bishop and justices, or any

five of the said justices without the said bishop, should be appointed, to be then and there examined and corrected ; and that the said accounts so made up, whether or not the same should have been examined and corrected by the said bishop and justices, or any of them, should be brought before the said bishop and justices, or any five of the said justices in the absence of the said bishop, at the opening of the court of the next quarter-sessions of the peace, to be held for the said county, after the first of August, yearly, there to remain during the whole of the sessions, for the inspection of any person, without fee or reward.

“ The accounts of the conservators appear to have proceeded from the year 1735, upon the footing of the balance of seven thousand, one hundred, and thirty-one pounds, due the 24th of June, 1734, and not of the reduced balance of one thousand, one hundred, and forty-three pounds, nine shillings, and nine-pence.

“ At the foot of the account for 1734, ending the 24th of June, 1735, and which was allowed at the general quarter-sessions, in 1739, there is a minute, of which the following is a copy : By reason of the decree, made by virtue of a commission for charitable uses, this present account was suspended, and not allowed or signed, according to the date thereof ; which decree, by an order of the high court of Chancery being reversed, we have now inspected, examined, allowed, and signed the said account, the 10th day of July, 1739.”

“ And the accounts for 1735, 1736, and 1737, were passed by the justices at the same sessions. In like manner the accounts proceeded to the 24th of June, 1738, when there was a balance due to the conservators of sixty-nine thousand, seven hundred, and seventy-nine

pounds, sixteen shillings, and five-pence halfpenny. The justices did not pass any other account till the year 1803, and in the intermediate time, the statute of 44th George III. above noticed passed, reducing the balance then claimed by the conservators to be due to them of ninety-nine thousand, eight hundred, and eleven pounds, fourteen shillings, and three-pence, to thirteen thousand pounds; and the accounts from the year 1803 to the present time have proceeded upon this reduced balance, and have been regularly passed by the justices at their quarter-sessions. The trustees receive the produce of the tolls, without any other charges upon them than the original debt, which on the 24th of June, 1819, was ten thousand, and sixty-seven pounds, two shillings, and ten-pence. They paid off that year six hundred and thirty-three pounds, five shillings, and ten-pence of the principal. The tolls from 24th June, 1819, to 24th June, 1820, amounted to two thousand, one hundred, and seventy pounds, two shillings, and four-pence; out of which they had to pay six hundred and four pounds, and six-pence, being one year's interest on the ten thousand, and sixty-seven pounds, two shillings, and ten-pence, at six per cent. The year's disbursements amounted to one thousand and ninety-three pounds, seventeen shillings, and eleven-pence; and the surplus to go in reduction of the ten thousand, and sixty-seven pounds, two shillings, and ten-pence, would be four hundred and seventy-two pounds, three shillings, and eleven-pence, leaving the debt on the 24th of June, 1820, nine thousand, five hundred, and ninety-four pounds, eighteen shillings, and eleven-pence. When this debt is quite paid off, the tolls are to be reduced according to the act of Anne; and then, after the

necessary expenditure of the year, the surplus will be applicable to the poor. It is difficult to say with certainty within what time there will be any available surplus; but it seems that if the tolls increase, as they have done for some years past, there is some reason to expect that there will be a benefit for the poor; though such an event must be considered as remote, since, when the debt is paid off, the tolls will be so reduced under the act, as nearly, if not entirely, to be covered and exhausted by the necessary current expenditure."

The following tables will enable the reader to form an idea of the utility of the navigation, and its increase.

<i>The tolls for eleven years from June, 1717.</i>				<i>The tolls for eleven years, from June, 1778.</i>			
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1718.....	379	4	5½	1779.....	620	11	1
1719.....	347	2	10½	1780.....	667	14	1
1720.....	368	9	1½	1781.....	587	13	8
1721.....	342	13	10	1782.....	621	5	6
1722.....	430	7	9½	1783.....	633	4	1
1723.....	407	5	6	1784.....	658	13	2
1724.....	361	12	10½	1785.....	594	17	3
1725.....	390	14	5½	1786.....	693	9	3
1726.....	431	16	0½	1787.....	710	7	11
1727.....	404	15	11	1788.....	737	5	3
1728.....	387	12	4½	1789.....	668	3	4
1820,	-	-	£2,161	2s.	4d.		
1821,	-	-	£2,368	19s.	8d.		

The preceding statement clearly proves, that the navigation of the river Tone is greatly on the improvement, and is productive of increasing benefits to Taunton and its neighbourhood. The town of Bridgewater must have derived from it essential advantages. It is certain, that the coal trade has, of late years, much increased both there, and at Taunton.

## CHAPTER V.

THE POLITICAL TRANSACTIONS AND REVOLUTIONS IN WHICH TAUNTON HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF ACTION—TRANSACTIONS IN THE REIGN OF HENRY THE SEVENTH—CIVIL WAR IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST—SIEGE OF TAUNTON—SIEGE RAISED—THE SIEGE RENEWED—REBELLION UNDER THE DUKE OF MONMOUTH—MONMOUTH PROCLAIMED KING AT TAUNTON—BATTLE OF SEDGEMOOR—DUKE OF MONMOUTH AND LORD GREY TAKEN PRISONERS—EXECUTION OF MONMOUTH—JUDGE JEFFREYS'S BLOODY ASSIZES—SUFFERERS AT TAUNTON—ANECDOTES OF PERSONS CONCERNED IN THE DUKE OF MONMOUTH'S REBELLION—BRIEF SKETCHES OF JUDGE JEFFREYS, COLONEL KIRKE, AND LORD FEVERSHAM.

**W**E must now turn, from the view of the mild and enriching operations of trade and commerce, to scenes of tumult, distress, and blood. Taunton has not been more noted for the former, than it has been distinguished for the latter. The few particulars and short accounts of the different fates of its castle, which we have been able to collect, are sufficient to shew that it had a share in the contests of the Saxon kings, and in the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster.

## TRANSACTIONS IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VII.

Taunton became particularly the theatre of military action in the reign of Henry the seventh. After this prince had been seated about twelve years on the throne, he met with a competitor for the crown, in a person who bore the name of Perkin Warbeck. He was represented in the proclamation issued out against him,



by the order of Henry, to be the son of John Osbecke, a converted jew, comptroller of Tournay, in Flanders. But he himself founded his pretensions to the crown, on his being the real duke of York, Richard, the younger son of king Edward IV. who, with his brother, had been supposed to have been murdered in the Tower, by the order of his uncle Richard III; and the curious investigations of an ingenious modern writer<sup>1</sup> have given plausibility to his claims. It is certain, that, whether it was owing to a conviction of this being his real character, or to jealousy and resentment, he was patronized and assisted, on the authority of these pretensions, by the duchess dowager of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. and by the king of Scotland, who consented to give him in marriage the lady Catharine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, of the blood royal of Scotland. Assisted by this patronage, Perkin Warbeck, for five years, harassed the government, and alarmed the mind of Henry; and involved him in a war with the Scottish king. This war afforded him a pretext for demanding of his subjects a subsidy of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds, to enable him to defend the nation.

These measures involved the town of Taunton in their operation. The subsidy was raised with great

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Horace Walpole, in his "Historic Doubts;" a work, which goes to clear up the character of king Richard III. from several charges, which have, for ages, entailed an odium upon it. The lord treasurer, Oxford, who read as much of history, and with as much judgment, as any man of his time, thought the arguments adduced by Mr. Walpole, to prove that Perkin Warbeck was the real duke of York, had the appearance of being conclusive.—*Granger's Biographical History*, vol. i. 8vo. p. 24. note. T.

rigour; and the provost of Penryn, the receiver of this tax in Cornwall, rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the poor, but robust and spirited, people of that county; a great number of whom, under the conduct of Thomas Flammock, a lawyer, and Michael Joseph,<sup>1</sup> a blacksmith, took arms, and rose up against the provost, who fled from their rage to Exeter, and, being pursued thither, withdrew into Somersetshire, and sought security in the castle of Taunton. Here he was seized by his countrymen, and killed. Elated with this success and revenge, they continued their march to Wells, where they were joined by lord Audley,<sup>2</sup> a nobleman of an ancient family, popular in his deportment, but vain, ambitious, and restless in his temper. He had, from the beginning, maintained a secret correspondence with the first movers of the insurrection, and was now joyfully received by them as their leader. Proud of the countenance given them

<sup>1</sup> "At Harwood, in the county of Devon, as people talk, that valliant blacksmith, Michael Joseph, (so might I call him, had it been in a better cause,) when he passed in his journey to Taunton, left a badge of his trade in the church-door."—*Risdon's Survey of Devon*, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> This lord Audley was of a very ancient and honourable family. He married Joan, daughter of Fulke Bouchier, lord Fitzwarine, and sister to the earl of Bath, by which he became popular in Devonshire and Cornwall. In the 8th of Henry VII. he attended that king at the siege of Boulogne, and four years after had summons to parliament. Joining with the Cornishmen in their insurrection, as abovementioned, and being taken prisoner, he was drawn from Newgate to Tower-hill, in his own coat of arms, painted on paper, but reversed and torn, and there beheaded, the 28th of June, 1497. His body was buried in the Blackfriars, near Ludgate.—*Collins's Peerage*, 1812, vol. vi. p. 552.

by so considerable a nobleman, they proceeded from Wells, under his lordship's banners, through Salisbury and Winchester, to Blackheath, where the king drew up his forces to give them battle. Being vigorously attacked by lord Daubeney, who commanded one body of the royal army, they were routed, two thousand were killed, and the rest were forced to surrender. Lord Audley was beheaded on Tower-hill, and Flam-mock and Joseph<sup>1</sup> were executed at Tyburn, the 24th of June, 1497.

This defeat only irritated, instead of subduing, the spirit of the Cornishmen; and urged them to new efforts against oppression. They looked out for a popular leader, and their views turned to Perkin Warbeck. There was wisdom in this choice, as the nature of his claims gave dignity to the cause, and was calculated to draw a great part of the nation, still attached to the house of York, into the same measures. He was invited from Ireland, whither he had retired, after a defeat which the Scottish king had received. Acceding to the proposal from Cornwall, he landed at Whitsand-bay, on the southern coast of that county, assumed the title of Richard IV. and, by public proclamation, invited the people to his standard. He raised a considerable force, and attempted to take the city of Exeter by storm. Failing in that design, he advanced to Taunton; where, on the 20th of September, 1497, he mustered his forces, threw the town into great consternation, seized the castle, and seemed determined to make a stand. But being closely pursued

<sup>1</sup> Joseph seemed to exult in his end, and boasted, with a preposterous ambition, that he should make a figure in history.

by Edward Courtenay, earl of Devonshire, while the king advanced against him with a formidable army, and finding himself deserted by his men, who, disheartened by the spirited defence made at Exeter, withdrew from him secretly, in various companies, his firmness forsook him, he deserted his army, and, with sixty horsemen, fled to the New Forest, in Hampshire, where he took sanctuary in Beaulieu monastery, not far from Southampton.

Previously to his flight, circumstances threatened, that Taunton would become the scene of a bloody action. Desperation had inflamed the Cornishmen, and they had appeared determined to gain a victory, or not live a day longer. The king, upon hearing that Warbeck was gone to Taunton, hastened thither with all speed, attended by Edward, duke of Buckingham, who had put himself at the head of a troop of young nobility and gentry, who served as volunteers, and who longed for an opportunity of displaying their courage and their loyalty.

Amongst those who formed the king's army were sir Alexander Baynham, sir Maurice Berkeley, sir Robert Tame, sir John Guise, sir Robert Poyntz, sir Henry Vernon, sir John Mortimer, sir Thomas Tremayle, sir Edward Sutton, sir Amias Paulett, sir John Bicknell, sir John Sapcote, sir Hugh Luttrell, and sir Francis Cheyney. When the king approached the town, whether he were averse to delay, or feared the turn of fortune's wheel, he sent before him Robert, lord Brooke, lord steward of the household; Giles, lord Daubeney, lord chamberlain; and sir Rice ap Thomas; to make the attack, and begin the battle;

while he followed with his forces, either to refresh them, after the armies should have come to action, with new succours, or, before he were seen, to beset the enemy in the rear. But the flight of Warbeck superseded his policy, prevented the risk of an engagement, and left to the king the enjoyment of a bloodless triumph.<sup>1</sup>

These transactions serve to give us an idea of the importance in which Taunton was held for centuries back, by the different parties in our civil contests. It remained a place of considerable strength till the unhappy civil wars in the reign of Charles I. when it became an object of vigorous struggle between the royal and parliamentary forces, which should possess its fortress; for it was considered as the key of the west of England.

#### CIVIL WAR IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

It is remote from the nature and design of this work, to enter into a minute and full account of the grounds of the war which took place between Charles I. and his parliament. We would only observe in general, that the design of that monarch to extend the prerogative beyond the bounds of the constitution gave rise to a long and bloody contest, which ended in the violent death of the king, and in throwing the nation into a state of anarchy. This design appeared in various arbitrary and oppressive measures. The king, in different instances, invaded the privileges, and attempted to annul the power, and even the existence, of the parliament; frequently dissolving it in displeasure, and governing twelve years without it. He

<sup>1</sup> Grafton's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 924, 925.

exacted money of his subjects in different illegal ways, particularly under the titles of *ship-money* and *loans*.

The former was raised by a writ, in form of a law, and directed to every county in England, to provide a ship of war, and send it by such a day, to such a place, amply equipped and manned. Of Somersetshire was required one ship, of six hundred and forty tons, and two hundred and fifty-six men. These writs were accompanied with instructions to the sheriff, to levy upon his county, instead of a ship, such a sum of money ; from whence this tax had its denomination. It produced to the king's coffers, for some years, the annual sum of two hundred thousand pounds. It is remarkable, that the king was advised to adopt this method of bringing money into his exchequer, on the authority of some old precedents, by his attorney-general, Mr. Noy ; who, before he was preferred by the court, had distinguished himself by his opposition to it, and had " always been ready to entertain any cause, whereby he might clash with the prerogative."

Another mode of supplying his wants, without the aid of parliament, which the king pursued, was by letters, under his privy seal, into the several counties of England, directed to those who were supposed best able to lend, requiring, by way of loan, such sums as each was taxed at. They were accompanied with letters, by one of the king's servants, exacting an immediate attention to his majesty's requisition, under the threat of being summoned before the king in person. A specimen of these letters, from one sent to Robert Lucas, esq. a gentleman in the neighbourhood of

<sup>1</sup> Howell's Letters, 1754. p. 246, 249.

Taunton, is given in the note below.<sup>1</sup> The terrors held forth in these requisitions were not meant to raise vain

<sup>1</sup> CHARLES R.

Trusty and Wel-beloved, We greet you well. Whereas all Our Subjects of the Kingdome of *England* and Dominion of *Wales*, are both by their Allegiance and the Act of Pacification bound to resist and suppress all such of Our Subjects of *Scotland*, as have in a hostile manner already entered or shall hereafter enter into this Kingdome. And by Law, your Personall service, attended in a warlike manner for the resistance of this Invasion, may be required by Vs, which We Desire to spare, Chusing rather, to invite your assistance for the maintenance of Our Army in a free and voluntary expression of your Affections to Our Service and the safety of this Kingdome. And whereas the Members of both Houses of Parliament Assembled at *Oxford*, have taken into their Consideration the necessity of supporting Our Army, for the Defence of Vs and Our People against this Invasion, and for the preservation of the Religion, Lawes, and Liberties of this Kingdome, and thereupon have agreed upon the speedy raising of the Summe of One Hundred Thousand pounds by Loane from particular Persons, towards the which themselves have advanced a very Considerable Proportion, and by their Examples hope, That Our well-affected Subjects throughout the Kingdome will in a short time make up the Remainder, whereby We shall not only be enabled to pay and recruite Our Army, but likewise be enabled to put our Armies in such a condition, as Our Subjects shall not suffer by Free-Quarter or the unruliness of Our Soldiers, which is now in present Agitation, and will, (We no way doubt, by the Advice of the Members of both Houses assembled) be speedily effected. We doe towards so good a Work, by the Approbation and Advice of the said Members of both Houses here assembled, desire you forthwith to lend Vs the Summe of *Twenty Pounds*, or the value thereof in Plate, toucht Plate, at five shillings, untoucht plate at foure shillings foure pence per ounce; and to pay or deliver the same within seven daies after the Receipt hereof, to the Hands of the High-Sheriffe of that Our County, or to such whom he shall appoint to receive the same, (upon his acquittances of the Receipt thereof) who is forthwith to returne and pay the same at

fears; but were actually productive of severe evils to those who opposed this measure. In London, some aldermen, who refused to deliver in a list of those who in their wards might be judged able to lend, were committed to prison; and divers gentlemen throughout the kingdom, who denied the loan, (in the whole twenty-two knights, and others of birth and character, to the number of seventy-eight,) were thrown into gaols, where many of them contracted such diseases as cost them their lives.<sup>1</sup>

*Corpus Christi Colledge, in Oxford, to the hands of the Earle of Bath, the Lord Seymour, Mr. Iohn Ashburnham, and Mr. Iohn Fettiplace, or any of them, who are appointed Treasurers for the receiving and issuing thereof by the said Members, (by whose Order only the said Money is to be disposed) and to give Receipts for the same, the which We promise to repay as soone as God shall enable Vs; This Summe being to be advanced with speed, We are necessitated to apply Our Selves to such Persons as your selfe, of whose Ability and Affection We have Confidence, giving you this Assurance, that in such further Charges, that the necessity of Our Iust Defence shall inforce Vs to require of Our good Subjects, your forwardnesse and disbursements shall be considered to your best Advantage. And so presuming you will not faile to expresse your Affection herein, We bid you farewell. Given at Our Court at OXFORD, the 14 day of February, in the Nineteenth year of Our Raigne. 1643.*

*By the Advice of the Members of both Houses Assembled at OXFORD.*

ED. LITTLETON C.

*Somerset. To Robert Luckis of St. Deacons.*

The demand in the above letter may appear to be sanctioned by parliament. The reader will observe therefore, that the members mentioned by the king were such as had deserted the parliament which met at Westminster, or had been disabled, and had joined the king at Oxford.—*Whitelocke's Memorials*, p. 76. T.

<sup>1</sup> Welwood's Memoirs, p. 292, 308; and Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts, p. 90, 92.



Such measures could not fail to rouse the indignation of a free people. The whole kingdom became the seat of war: some joined the parliament, others enlisted under the royal standard, and every county flowed with the blood of fellow citizens.

In 1645 the king had all the county of Somerset in his power, except Taunton. The town had been taken by the parliament's forces, in August, 1642. About this period, sir Ralph (afterwards lord) Hopton, a gentleman of great mental and bodily accomplishments, and trained to war in the Low Countries, had rendered the king most important services in the west; where, in a few months, he raised a formidable army, and fortified no less than forty garrisons.<sup>1</sup> To check the progress of his influence, and to prevent the dangers threatened by his growing fortunes, sir William Waller advanced into these parts, with a well furnished army; and taking possession of Taunton, was particularly the object of the direction given to one body of the parliament's forces. The views of the parliament, in the west, were greatly assisted by the conduct of sir John Horner, Mr. Alexander Popham, and other gentlemen. Mr. Sandford, the high-sheriff of Somerset, was attached to its interest. The principal gentry of the neighbourhood, the trained bands, the mayor and principal inhabitants of the town, aided, with horse and foot, the intention of securing this place for the parliament.<sup>2</sup> When, on taking it, the houses of suspected

<sup>1</sup> Granger's Biographical History, vol. ii. p. 236; and Heath's Chronicle, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Oldmixon says, (Hist. of the Stuarts, p. 208,) that "sir William Portman, Mr. Colce, Mr. Pyne, and others, entered Taunton with

persons were searched, in that of Mr. Browne, a popish recusant, they found armour for sixty men; in alderman Skinner's, arms for twenty men; and, in Mr. Tucker's, the collector of rents, and steward to the bishop of Winchester, arms for one hundred men, horse and foot, twenty barrels of gunpowder, fifty great saddles, and shot of all sorts. The search was made through the neighbourhood, and even the county; and from various places, including the towns of Bridgwater, Wells, Bath, Ilchester, Glastonbury, Ilminster, and others, they collected stores of ammunition and arms for, at least, eighteen hundred men; great saddles, one hundred and fifty; light horses, one hundred and fifty; and ten thousand pounds in money. All these articles were conveyed to the castle in Taunton, and lodged there under the custody of the mayor and aldermen, with a sufficient guard.<sup>1</sup>

This attempt to secure and fortify Taunton in the interest of the parliament soon met with a temporary impediment and defeat. For, in the next year, the a body of horse and foot," and got possession of the arms, ammunition, and money, as mentioned in the text. These had been provided, he adds, by bishop Curle, "as a proof that nobody had ever thought of making war for church and king, till the earl of Essex was on the march."

"Thus was this populous trading county," he continues, "secured for the parliament; but through the corruption of the leading men, and the inconstancy of the people, so many deserted this cause afterwards, as gave great trouble to the well-affected in those parts. Those deserters were not the Horners, the Pophams, the Harbys, the Hippsleys, the Wroths, who continued in the interest and service of their country."

<sup>1</sup> Vicars' Jehovah Jireh, or Parliamentary Chronicle, 1644. p. 136.

marquess of Hertford drove from hence the parliament's forces, and took possession of it in favour of the king. But the fruits of this victory were not lasting. For in 1644, on the 8th of July, soon after the battle of Marston-moor, colonel Blake and sir Robert Pye again took Taunton for the parliament. Colonel Reeves, who commanded the castle for the king, and his soldiers, had quarters given them to march to Bridgwater. There were found in the castle one demi-culverin and ten other small pieces, two tons of match, eight barrels of powder, store of arms and ammunition, with much household furniture, and plenty of provisions.<sup>1</sup> This gave great strength to the interest of the parliament in the west; which was, about the same time, joined by four thousand volunteers at Chard, three thousand more at Collumpton, and two thousand raised by colonel Ware, and entertained at Barnstaple. Colonel Popham was ordered to Taunton, to take charge of a regiment raised for him by the county.<sup>2</sup> But the violent spirit of the royal party, nevertheless, shewed itself in outrageous acts. Sir Francis Dodington, meeting with a minister on the road near Taunton, asked him, "Who art thou for, priest?" who answered, "For God and his gospel." Upon which Dodington shot him dead.<sup>3</sup> Military efforts were also made to recover, for the king, this strong town; for, in the same year, three thousand of his forces besieged it; but the governor,

<sup>1</sup> Rushworth's Collections, part iii. vol. ii. and vol. v. p. 685. Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 90, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Whitelocke, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Whitelocke, p. 96.

colonel Blake, sent out a party against the besiegers, which, falling upon them, killed and took many; and among the rest some officers.<sup>1</sup>

#### SIEGE OF TAUNTON.

For some following months, things remained in a quiet state at Taunton; but early in the spring of 1645, a large body of forces, to the amount of ten thousand, marched to the attack of the town, under lord Goring, “a man of ready wit, good understanding, and a clear head; but too mercurial to be at the head of an army, and too vicious to be in a station, where example could corrupt.” He led his forces with valour and resolution, but kept them under no discipline. “That part of the country, where his army lay, was a scene of ravage and licentiousness.”<sup>2</sup> The butcheries, rapes, and robberies they committed, fixed on them the opprobrious name of “Goring’s crew;”

<sup>1</sup> Whitelocke, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> George, lord Goring, was the son of sir George Goring, of Hurst-Pierrepont, in Sussex. The father was raised to the peerage by the title of lord Goring, 4th of Charles I. and having faithfully and eminently served the king in his troubles, was advanced to the title of earl of Norwich, 8th of November, 20th Charles I. His eldest son, George, lord Goring, (called, before his father’s advancement to an earldom, colonel Goring, and general Goring,) is well known as general of horse, in the civil war; and when all was lost, went into the Netherlands, and served the king of Spain, as lieutenant-general of his forces in Flanders, and afterwards in Spain. He married lady Lettice Boyle, daughter of Richard, earl of Cork, but had no issue; and surviving her, is said to have assumed the habit of a Dominican friar in Spain, where he died during his father’s life-time. The earl survived till January 6th, 1662, when he was succeeded by his surviving son, Charles, second earl of Norwich.—*Collins’s Peerage, by Brydges*, vol. ix. p. 459.

and left an abhorrence of them in the minds of the people of Taunton, for several generations. The firmness and conduct, with which colonel Blake supported the siege, lengthened its duration. At the opening of the siege, colonel Edmund Wyndham, then governor of Bridgwater, and the commander of a royal regiment, sent a threatening summons to colonel Blake, requiring him, "upon pain of fire and sword," to surrender the town and castle; and persuading him to it from the "indefensibleness of the place, and to prevent the effusion of more christian blood." To which demand Blake returned this spirited answer:—

"These are to let you know, that as we neither fear your menaces, nor accept your proffers, so we wish you for time to come to desist from all overtures of the like nature unto us, who are resolved, to the last drop of our blood, to maintain the quarrel we have undertaken: and doubt not but the same GOD, who hath hitherto protected us, will ere long bless us with an issue answerable to the justness of our cause: howsoever, to him alone shall we stand or fall."<sup>1</sup>

The resolution of the governor, and the fortitude of the inhabitants, were put to full trial by the extremities to which a long siege reduced them. For, though soon after the above determination was formed, a strong party of the parliament's forces broke through the besiegers, and supplied the town with store of provisions, and those articles of which they were most in want,<sup>2</sup> yet, before the siege was raised, their ammu-

<sup>1</sup> Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 116. and Locke's MS.

<sup>2</sup> Ut ante.

nition was spent, the country round depopulated, and their provisions so exhausted, that, as tradition reports, there was but one hog left in the town; which half-starved animal was whipped round the walls, and made to cry, in different places, to deceive the besiegers into a belief, that fresh supplies had been thrown in. The fidelity with which the town adhered to the cause it espoused, and the calamities which its perseverance drew on it, led Larry, a French writer, to call Taunton "the Saguntum of the parliament," in allusion to Saguntum in Spain. But the distresses of the former had a more happy termination than those of the latter; which Hannibal took and demolished, but Taunton was effectually relieved.<sup>1</sup>

At the time Taunton was besieged by the king's forces, the army of the parliament had been new-modelled, and sir Thomas Fairfax, eldest son of lord Fairfax, of Denton, in the county of York, had been called from the north, which had been the scene of his military exertions, to take the command in the south and west. This gentleman had been formed as a soldier under Horatio, lord Vere, in the Netherlands, and was at the taking of Bois-le-duc from the Spaniards. Lord Vere, his master in the art of war, was remarkable for doing great things with few men; and Fairfax with the loss of few. He was one of the first characters of his times for integrity and military accomplishments.<sup>2</sup>

When the army, which sir Thomas Fairfax was to lead, was formed and fitted for the field, he was

<sup>1</sup> Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> Granger's Biographical History, vol. ii. p. 250, 251.

commanded to advance into the west, with the forces for the relief of Taunton, eight thousand horse and foot; and care was taken to furnish them with money and provisions; two thousand pounds being voted for this purpose. It had been debated, whether sir Thomas Fairfax should march with his newly-raised army to Oxford, or the west. Oxford was the king's headquarters and garrison; and there all his ordnance and artillery were lodged. 'That it was also a midland garrison in the heart of the kingdom, and, being the constant seat of war from the beginning, the county had suffered longer than any other place in the kingdom, were powerful arguments for a direction of all the forces of the parliament to that place; but the great distresses that Taunton suffered from a close siege, and the importance of that town, as the asylum of the best affected to the cause of the parliament, determined in favour of the western expedition.'

While sir Thomas Fairfax was on his march to the west, the king, availing himself of this destination of the parliament's forces, drew his artillery out of Oxford, to embody himself in the field. And at the same time, the princes Rupert and Maurice, at the request of the king, marched with all their forces to Oxford, to aid his majesty's plan of operations. On these accounts it was judged necessary to recal sir Thomas Fairfax from the service of the west, and to assign only a part of his army to the relief of Taunton. When he had reached Blandford, he received two expresses to this purpose, from the committee of both kingdoms.

Accordingly, a brigade only was sent on to Taunton,

\* Spriggs's *England's Recovery*, p. 13, 14.

while the rest of the army was directed to march back to join lieutenant-general Cromwell, and major-general Brown, then near Oxford, and to attend the king's motions with their united forces. The brigade, destined for the relief of Taunton, consisted of four regiments of foot, namely, colonel Weldon's, colonel Fortescue's, colonel Floyd's, and colonel Ingoldsby's, under the command of colonel Weldon, the senior colonel. These were joined at Dorchester by six companies of foot, belonging to the garrison of Chichester; and after that, by as many from Lyme. These forces amounted, in the whole, to four or five thousand foot; besides a body of one thousand eight hundred, or two thousand horse, consisting of the regiments of the colonels Graves, Cook, and Fitzjames, and the Plymouth regiment. All of whom, being animated with the same resolution against the royal party, and associated in mutual affection to each other, proceeded without delay or halting, till they came within a few days' march of Taunton.<sup>1</sup>

When (as Sprigge relates the particulars of this expedition) they were come within ten miles of the town, having the advantage of the hills, they discharged ten pieces of their artillery; which peal, according to the information they had previously given by their spies, was a signal to notify, that they were advanced within that number of miles. But they were defeated in this intention; for, some few days before, the royal forces had divided themselves into two parties, each consisting of horse and foot, with some pieces of cannon. These

<sup>1</sup> Sprigge's *England's Recovery*, p. 17. Rushworth's *Collections*, p. 29, or part ii. vol. i. p. 29.



skirmished with each other, with powder only, in the sight of the town, to make the garrison and inhabitants believe, (as they gave out,) that the forces of the parliament, coming to their relief, were there encountered and defeated. This was a manœuvre to draw a party out of the town to the succour of their friends, which they might cut off by an ambuscade. This stratagem proved unsuccessful. The besieged kept close to their works; and the royal forces, disappointed in the effect of their mock-fight, returned to storm the town, firing it with grenades and mortars, by which two long streets of fair buildings were burnt to the ground; but though they entered the line, they were driven back by the valiant resistance of colonel Blake, who gave them such showers of balls, as filled the trenches with their dead bodies. About four o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th of May, which was Sunday, the royal army having drawn off their artillery, and the rear of it being on the march, a party of colonel Weldon's horse was sent, which advanced to the very works. The town, being now assured of the approach of their friends to their relief, sallied out, and fell upon the rear of the king's forces, of whom they killed some, and took others prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

At the very time when affairs were taking a turn so favourable to the relief of the town, an amiable and respectable man, Mr. Thomas Welman,<sup>2</sup> vicar of

<sup>1</sup> The king, who was then at Oxford, was much perplexed at the raising of the siege of Taunton. Goring's heart had been set upon the reduction of the place, that he might bring that rich and populous town and county under contribution, and indulge himself in rapine and riot.—*Oldmixon's Hist. of the Stuarts*, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> This gentleman was born at Ilchester, 1606, and educated at

Luppit, near Honiton, who had fled to Taunton for security from the rage and cruelty of Goring's forces, and whose prayers and sermons had greatly encouraged the people, under all the difficulties and dangers of the siege, to trust in GOD, was preaching in St. James's church, on Mal. iii. 6. The doctrine, on which he

Oxford, where he spent seven years. He was episcopally ordained, and was, for a considerable time, curate to Mr. Eedes, of Honiton ; where he was greatly beloved for his useful labours, and amiable conversation. There he married the daughter of Mr. Isaac Northcote, of that town, a pious woman, who was his wife almost fifty years, and survived him about twelve. The vicarage of Luppit was bestowed on him by ——— Southcot, esq. a gentleman of the parish. When the county was free from the ravages of the royal army, he returned and though he had offers of better preferment, continued ; to labour there, till he was ejected by the act of uniformity in 1662. He had, at that time, seven children, and no large estate to maintain them ; but he professed, that if he had nothing to leave them, he would rather commit them to the care of Divine Providence, than act against the conviction of his own mind. There were many weeping eyes when he preached his farewell sermon. He died in 1685, aged eighty. After he was ejected, he continued to preach as opportunity offered, in his house ; and in difficult times, either in the morning before day, or some hours after night. Informers and officers, allured by sums of money, often endeavoured to apprehend him, but were disappointed. Many scholars, designed for the ministry, were indebted to him for his encouragement, direction, and friendly services ; and among others, his cousin-german, Dr. Simon Welman, a noted physician, but who was educated for the pulpit. The heavenly and spiritual frame of his mind diffused such an unction through his discourses, that it was said " he spoke rather like an angel than a man." His singular humility, modesty, and mild temper, made him, when he heard of his people's miscarriages, prefer convincing them of their faults, rather by letters, than by a reproof to their face. He lived, and died, a non-conformist, with a great deal of comfort, though he did not leave his family rich.—*Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial*, vol. i. p. 378—380. T.

principally insisted, was, that "God's immutability is the ground of the stability of his church and people." Before the sermon was ended, some ran into the church, crying out, "*Deliverance.*" The congregation, at the sound of this unexpected good news, were running out of the church; but the preacher prevailed with them to tarry, and join with him, in returning thanks to God, for so great a mercy.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Goring's troops ran away in confusion, leaving many arms behind, and retreated to Pitminster, where they took up their quarters in the fields; but they cut off the pursuit of the parliament's army, by blocking up the road with trees.

On Monday morning, colonel Weldon, with the officers, entered Taunton without opposition; "where they found a sad spectacle of a flourishing town almost ruined by fire and the extremities of war, and the people nigh famished for want of food." When he had spent some time with colonel Blake, he gave orders for the whole brigade to retreat, and take up their quarters at Chard.

East-street suffered more from fire during the siege,

<sup>1</sup> The following pamphlets were published relating to this siege:—

1. "Two Letters, one from sir Thomas Fairfax, the other from colonel Ralph Weldon, of raising the Siege and relieving the Towne of Taunton, read in Parliament, 14th May, 1645." Quarto.

2. "A Narration of the Expedition to Taunton, and raising the Siege before it, sent from a Commander in the Army, May 18, 1645." Quarto.

3. "The Story of the Clubmen, and Relief of Taunton, by the Army under sir Thomas Fairfax, from July 1 to 6, 1645." Quarto.

4. "A Letter to William Lenthall, esq. Speaker of the House of Commons, July 5, 1645, of the Raising of the Siege of Taunton, by the Parliament's Forces, 1645." Quarto.

than any other part of the town, having been several times stormed and entered by the enemy. In the last storm, one Bawdon, a parliament officer, having his thumb cut or shot off, as he was driving some of the royal party before him, out of that part of the town, protested the *rogues should not carry it away with them*; and while he was searching for it, one of those rogues, who remained drinking in an ale-house, shot him dead, out of a window; which was the greatest loss the besieged sustained in that action.<sup>1</sup>

It greatly facilitated the raising of the siege of Taunton, that the king's army had no other information, but that the whole force of general Fairfax was on the march towards them; whereas it was only a brigade. This mistake was lamented by colonel John Digby, and urged by him in excuse for retreating from the town. Had they known this, they would probably have stood their ground; for they had, in their own opinion, before the town, double the strength sufficient to have fought the parliament's forces, and also to have made good the siege. Their apprehensions, concerning the greatness of the army advancing against them, were not without foundation; for Fairfax did actually march with the whole army from Blandford, towards Dorchester, as if he designed to lead all his troops to the relief of Taunton; but then he suddenly wheeled about eastward with the main body, and detached, as we have said, only a brigade to the west.

It is surprising, when we reflect on the distresses to which the town was reduced, that, from the beginning to the raising of the siege, it lost only two hundred

<sup>1</sup> Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts, p. 279.

men. Two hundred of the royal army were made prisoners, and two hundred and sixty stand of arms were taken. In the advance of Fairfax's brigade to the town, ten of it fell upon one hundred of the king's, and killed and took some of them.

On receiving the news that Taunton was relieved, the commons appointed a day of public thanksgiving for the same.<sup>1</sup> Letters of thanks were sent to sir Thomas Fairfax, for sending relief to it, and recommending to him colonel Weldon, for his good services; and to the governor, to the inhabitants of the town, and to the soldiers in it, for their spirited and gallant exertions in defending it through a siege of fifty-four days. An order was also issued for bestowing on the garrison, for its valiant and faithful defence, two thousand pounds; and to colonel Blake, in particular, a grant of five hundred pounds was made.<sup>2</sup>

The natives, for many years, retained and cherished a lively and devout sense of their deliverance, and of the wonders that distinguished it; "wonders," it was

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1645, in allusion to the successes gained by the armies acting under the orders of the parliament, there was licensed and printed a sermon, in which the preacher, in triumph, exclaimed to his congregation—

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever;

"Who remembered us at Naseby, for his mercy endureth for ever;

"Who remembered us in Pembrokeshire, for his mercy endureth for ever;

"Who remembered us at TAUNTON, for his mercy endureth for ever."—*Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy*, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> The preceding particulars are related in Whitelocke's *Memo-rials*, p. 140, and 141; Sprigge's *England's Recovery*, p. 17, 18; and Rushworth's *Collections*, vol. vi. p. 29, or part iv. vol. i. p. 29.

said, "that might even fill a volume, and give life to a story that should outlive the world." The 11th of May was celebrated for some years by acts of public devotion, and anniversary sermons;<sup>1</sup> and the mercies of it conveyed down in historical song.\*

<sup>1</sup> Three of these sermons are in print: one entitled *Man's Wrath and God's Praise*, on Psalm lxxvi. 10. by George Newton, A. M. 1646. The second, "*The Waters of Marah sweetned*," by T. B. A. M. and minister of the Gospel in the county, 1647. The third, "*The Works of Heaven upon Earth; or the Excellence of Praise and Thanksgiving, in part displayed*," by Henry Jeans, minister of God's word, at Chedzoy, 1648. The circumstances of the siege, and of the deliverance, being then recent in the memory of the people, these discourses contain no narrative of either. Each of them is dedicated to the mayor of the year, as well as to the inhabitants.

\* The following is the most exact copy of the song, which we have been able to procure:—

The eleventh of May was a joyful day,  
When Taunton got relief;  
Which turn'd our sorrows into joy,  
And eas'd us of our grief.

The Taunton men were valiant then,  
In keeping of the town,  
While many of those, who were our  
Lay gasping on the ground. [foes,

When colonel Massey, of the same,  
Did understand aright,  
He, like a man of courage bold,  
Prepared himself to fight.

With that our soldiers, one and all,  
Cast up their caps, and cry'd,  
What need we fear what man can do,  
Since God is on our side.

Long time did Goring lie encamp'd  
Against fair Taunton town:  
He made a vow to starve us out,  
And batter our castle down.

Within our castle did remain  
(A garrison so strong)  
Those likely lads which did unto  
Our parliament belong.

Before day-light appear'd in view,  
The news to them was come,  
That Goring, and his curs'd crew,  
Were all dispers'd and gone.

But who can tell what joy was there,  
And what content of mind  
Was put into the hearts of those,  
Who'd been so long confin'd?

Our bread was fourteen-pence per  
And all things sold full dear; [pound,  
Which made our soldiers make short  
meals,  
And pinch themselves full near.

Our beer was eighteen-pence per  
(As for a truth was told,) [quart,  
And butter eighteen-pence per pound  
To christians there was sold.

The cavaliers dispers'd with fear,  
And forced were to run,  
On the eleventh of May, by break of  
Ere rising of the sun. [day.

Let Taunton men be mindful then  
In keeping of this day:  
We'll give God praise with joy always,  
Upon th' eleventh of May.

## THE SIEGE RENEWED.

Ere the gladness and triumph of the people, in this deliverance, could subside, or they could recover from the distresses of the siege, they were again attacked, and reduced to new extremities. Before the end of May, the king's forces under Goring, Hopton, Berkeley, and Grenville, about ten thousand in all, joined together, engaged with colonel Weldon's brigade, and, overpowering them with numbers, obliged them to retreat into the town; which thus was again closely besieged, and lord Goring continued to lie with his army about it, with the sanguine hope of subduing the parliament's forces there, and of settling the west of England in an absolute posture for the king's service. Governor Blake, in several sallies, gained the advantage over the royal general, (colonel Ingoldsby, in particular, fell upon the royal quarters, and slew divers considerable men;) yet found himself beset with difficulties, and was obliged to write to the parliament, in the most pressing terms, for immediate assistance. His letters represented, "that if relief came not speedily to them, they should be put into great straits for provisions and ammunition: they assured the house, they never accepted a parley from the enemy, but scorned it; and they had some ammunition left, and were resolved to feed upon their horses: they requested the house to take consideration of their condition; and left all to the ALMIGHTY, who, they doubted not, would relieve them." The parliament returned for answer, "that relief should speedily come to them, and what money they took up

the house would pay ; and desired them to go on in their vigilance and valour, and they should never want the encouragement of the parliament."

The situation of Taunton accordingly met with attention and support. An ordinance was sent to the lords to raise a regiment of dragoons for its relief. Divers officers, left out of the new army, offered to enlist themselves for the same purpose ; and the house directed, that such as should enlist themselves should have a fifth part of their arrears paid them within a month after their advance ; and those who did not perform their proposal should forfeit all their arrears.<sup>1</sup>

The town was encouraged by the information they received of the aid the parliament was about to afford them, and by a small supply of powder from Lyme. A party of the garrison issued out on the besiegers, and took and slew above four hundred of them, with the loss of one hundred. The royal forces, in consequence of this, drew back, and the quarters were enlarged five or six miles in compass.

Besides the assistance which the parliament afforded, the common council, and others, of London, entered into an association for the relief of Taunton ; and by voluntary subscriptions, collected four thousand pounds for raising one thousand horse, to join colonel Massey, who had been sent, by the order of the commons, into the west.<sup>2</sup>

But what most effectually contributed to the relief of the town, and raising the siege, was the intercepting

<sup>1</sup> Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 144—146.—Oldmixon's Hist. of the Stuarts, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 144, 145.



of a packet from lord Goring to the king, discovering the state of things in the west, and giving the king hopes of his being able soon to march to his assistance at Leicester, with a considerable army, and urging him, in the mean time, to stand only upon a defensive posture. The person, to whom the despatch was entrusted, carried the letters to sir Thomas Fairfax, and delivered them to him the day after his victory over the royal army at Naseby ; the disastrous fate of which battle the king would probably have avoided, by declining to fight, had the packet been faithfully presented to him. The intelligence derived from the letters quickened sir Thomas Fairfax to relieve Taunton with speed.

Having besieged and taken Leicester, and settled affairs there, after its surrender, which engaged him only for four days, the general marched to Warwick, doubtful, whether to follow the king, and prevent his raising a new army in Wales, or to proceed to the assistance of the parliament's army in the west ; where according to common report, the king's forces were, twelve thousand, while general Massey, who was sent to the relief of Taunton, had only three thousand. This superiority of numbers, it was rightly judged, would enable lord Goring both to keep off Massey, and to shut up the parliament's forces in the town ; and threatened a blow, which would prove ruinous to their cause ; for success there would give the king's army the entire possession of Lyme, Poole, and Weymouth. The consequences to be apprehended, on account of the trade and riches of those counties, and of the considerable towns and ports on each side, either towards

France or Ireland, were powerful inducements with the general to pursue his march thither. But in a business of such moment, being cautious of acting on his own judgment only, he sent expresses to the parliament, and the committee of both kingdoms, and submitted his motions to their advice and counsel.

Yet, that no time might be lost, he proceeded on his march as far as Marlborough, which he reached on Saturday, the 28th of June ; and, while he rested there, on the next day, having received the consent of the house, and of the committee of both kingdoms, to march westward, he sent forward spies to Taunton, to give notice of the army's advance for their relief.

He accordingly bent his course that way, and arrived at Blandford, on the second of July, where he joined colonel Massey, and where intelligence met him, that the spies had got into Taunton, and communicated the welcome news of his advance, and that lord Goring had drawn off to Blackdown, and burnt his huts.

On the next night, at Dorchester, a confirmation of this intelligence was received ; and it was added, that it had been discovered, that the intention of lord Goring's drawing off his men to Blackdown was to tempt the forces in the town to sally out, that he might take advantage to surprize them ; but, failing in his expectation, he had returned again to his former quarters about Taunton, and had made some slight and ineffectual attempts on the parliament's party there. Sir Thomas Fairfax's foot, hearing that lord Goring had renewed the siege, were eager to march all that night, after twelve miles' march in the day, which was also but the moiety of sixty-two miles' march in five days

before: so far, says my author, did their compassion to Taunton, and their party there, carry them beyond consideration of themselves.

On the 4th of July, the army proceeded from Dorchester to Beaminster. Here positive intelligence was received, at night, that lord Goring had drawn off his troops from the siege of Taunton, and had marched to Ilminster; and that, on that night, his quarters would be at Somerton. The general, upon this, sent a party of horse to Crewkerne, who took some of Goring's soldiers prisoners; whose testimony confirmed the news of the siege being raised, and added, that their army had marched towards Langport. Thus was Taunton, a second time, relieved, and the parliament's interest there rescued from the imminent danger of an entire overthrow. The town had, on the 3d of July, when it was delivered, stood a five weeks' siege. One thousand of the royal forces were slain, and four hundred taken prisoners, with four hundred stand of arms. The parliament lost, among other officers, colonel Floyd and colonel Richbell; both of them faithful, experienced soldiers. Many officers, and persons of quality, in the royal army, fell; and particularly sir John Digby<sup>\*</sup> received, in this siege,

<sup>\*</sup> In a "Catalogue of the Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, (of the catholick religion,) that were slain in the late War, in defence of their King and Country," printed at the end of "Calendarium Catholicum," for 1662, the following names occur:—

"Captain Richardson, slain before Taunton.

"Major Richard Norwood, slain before Taunton.

"Sir John Digby, wounded at Taunton, and died at Bridgwater."

Sir John Digby was the second son of sir Everard Digby, who suffered on account of being concerned in the gunpowder plot, in

a wound, of which he afterwards died at Bridgwater. The valour, diligence, and fidelity of colonel Weldon, and the rest of the commanders, who engaged in the defence of Taunton, gained great encomiums; as did also the good services of the horse, commanded by colonel Graves, who, in several sallies upon the royal army, were very successful.<sup>1</sup>

The zeal and steadiness, with which the town of Taunton, including the corporation, as well as the inhabitants, supported the cause of the parliament, against the despotic views, and arbitrary measures of Charles I. were remembered against them, when his son Charles II. was established on the throne of his ancestors; and full revenge was taken for the disloyalty and injuries, with which he conceived his royal father had been treated. In the year 1662, commissioners were appointed and named for each county, city, and borough, for securing the peace of the kingdom, and regulating corporations. Orders were issued out by them for displacing the officers, and demolishing the walls of the cities and towns which had bulwarks and garrisons, and had maintained them through the war, against the king. Such places were looked upon as having been the seats of rebellion; and it was determined, by their destruction, to give security and an example to future times. The county troops, and respective trained bands, to prevent tumults and insurrections, were employed as guards, at the demolition of their fortifications. Taunton felt the effects 1605, and brother of the celebrated sir Kenelm Digby. He was a colonel in king Charles the first's army, and a major-general in the western parts of England.

<sup>1</sup> Sprigge's *England's Recovery*, p. 47, 48, 53—56, and 60.

of these measures. Its corporation was deprived of its charter, and its walls so entirely rased to the foundation, that its present inhabitants cannot tell where they stood.<sup>1</sup>

This step by no means tended to conciliate the affections of the town to the new government, though, at the instance of Dr. Peter Mew, bishop of Winchester, the charter, as we have before related, was restored. Every thing, during the reign of Charles II. contributed to alarm the friends of the protestant religion, and of the constitution, with fears of the return and full establishment of popery and despotism.\* When the duke of York ascended the throne, his conduct soon shewed what expectations were to be entertained, concerning his views and principles. On the next Sunday after the death of his brother, he went openly to mass. His queen, her confessor, and other ambitious catholics, insinuated to him, that a standing army, and advancing the Roman catholics to civil and military employments, were the only means of establishing his authority ; for the fanatics and presbyterians were able to disturb him ; and the loyalty of the episcopal party, only the effect of animosity to the dissenters, was even to be suspected. He easily adopted the project that was suggested to him ; and began

<sup>1</sup> Heath's Chronicle, p. 512. About thirty-five years since some workmen, digging for bricks, met with the moat, and, following its direction, found it to be twelve feet deep from the level of the ground, about sixteen feet wide at top, and four at bottom.

\* A report prevailed, that the king had been heard to say, " That he would make the name of parliaments to be forgotten in England."—*Secret History of the Reigns of Charles II. and James II.* p. 117.

to closet men, and, by fair words and ample promises, endeavoured to allure them to assist his intentions. His zeal to introduce and establish popery was so well known, that pope Innocent IX. in a letter to him, while he applauded it, expressed his apprehensions, lest he should push it too far.<sup>1</sup>

By these projects, and their recent sufferings under Charles II. the minds of the people were disposed to favour any efforts that promised the secure enjoyment of their religion and liberties. They looked up to a prince, even of royal blood, as their future deliverer. This was James, duke of Monmouth.

#### DUKE OF MONMOUTH'S REBELLION.

The duke of Monmouth passed as the natural son of Charles the second, whilst prince of Wales, by Mrs. Lucy Walter, sometimes called Mrs. Barlow, daughter of Richard Walter, of Haverford-West, in the county of Pembroke, esq. It was suspected that the prince was married to this lady.\* It is certain that he ever expressed a particular kindness and deference to her. He had allowed his servants to wait on her at table kneeling, and to pay all the marks of respect due only to a queen ; and her son, the duke of Monmouth, was distinguished, above all his other natural sons, by great titles, high employments, and every expression of favour and affection.

<sup>1</sup> History of William III. vol. i. p. 173, 174.

<sup>\*</sup> In a novel, dedicated to William, lord Russel, entitled, "The Perplexed Prince," which pretended to give the secret history of Charles II. and Lucy Walter, it was asserted, that the king was certainly married to her. This book, though a mean performance, had great influence upon the populace.—*Granger's Biographical History of England*, vol. iii. 8vo. p. 194, 195.

The duke of Monmouth was born at Rotterdam, on the 9th of April, 1649, and bore the name of *James Crofts* till his majesty's restoration. He was educated chiefly at Paris, under the eye of Henrietta Maria, the queen-mother. His governor was Thomas Ross, esq. who was afterwards secretary to Mr. Coventry, during his embassy in Sweden. In July, 1662, he was brought to England, and received by the king, with every demonstration of joy and affection. He had apartments at Whitehall, and an establishment suitable to his birth; and on February 14th, 1662-3, the king was pleased to create him baron of Tynedale, in the county of Northumberland, earl of Doncaster, in the county of York, and duke of Monmouth, with remainder to his heirs-male. On the 28th of March, 1668, he was elected a knight of the Garter. These honours were bestowed for the purpose of gracing the duke's nuptials with the lady Anne Scot, daughter and sole heir of Francis, earl of Buccleugh, who was then esteemed the greatest fortune, and the finest lady in the three kingdoms. Being married, he took the name of SCOT, and he and his lady were created duke and duchess of Buccleugh.

On the breaking out of the second Dutch war, Lewis XIV. king of France, having agreed to assist the English government with a squadron of ships, king Charles II. obliged himself to send six thousand men to act with the French army against Holland. The English auxiliaries were commanded by the duke of Monmouth; who, on the 1st of May, 1672, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general in the French army, by the king, who commanded in person,

with the celebrated Marshal Turenne. The duke of Monmouth was present in the councils of war, was at the taking of Orfoy, Rhinberg, Emmerick, Doesburg, Zutphen, and in the French king's camp, near Utrecht, when that city sent her keys to the conqueror.

‘ In November following, being informed that the prince of Orange had set down before Charleroy, his grace went again to France. In 1673, he was at the siege of Maestricht, which was defended by a garrison of ten thousand men; and, having the command of the attack of the counterscarp, behaved with such conduct and bravery, that the French king made a public acknowledgment of his services, and the town soon after surrendered.

‘ About this time the duke of Monmouth was master of the horse to the king, and had the command of the first troop of life-guards; in 1670 he succeeded the duke of Albemarle, as captain-general of the king's forces; and was soon after appointed lord lieutenant of the east-riding of the county of York, governor of Hull, chief justice in Eyre south of Trent, and lord high chamberlain of Scotland. He was also a member of his majesty's privy council. In 1674, he was elected chancellor of the university of Cambridge, and three years after was constituted lord lieutenant of the county of Stafford.

‘ In 1678, the duke went over to Holland, and made the campaign under the prince of Orange, against the French; where they were both present at the desperate attack upon the abbey of St. Dennis, animating the soldiers by their presence and example.

‘ Sir William Temple, in his Memoirs, says, “ that



the duke of Monmouth was in his greatest height in 1679, when the king fell sick at Windsor, and with three such fits of fever, as gave much apprehension, and a general amazement." The earls of Essex and Halifax, being about the king, thought his danger great, and their own so too, and that if any thing happened to the king's life, the duke of Monmouth would be at the head of the nation, in opposition to the duke of York, and in conjunction with the earl of Shaftesbury, who had threatened to have their heads upon prorogation of the last parliament. This fright had so affected the two earls, that, not staying to see how the king's second fit would be, " they proposed to his majesty the sending immediately for the duke of York; which being resolved, and the despatch made with all the secrecy and speed imaginable, his royal highness came over on the 2d of September; but finding the king recovered, it was agreed to pass for a journey wholly of his own, and that it should be received by his majesty and the three lords, with all signs of surprise. When this was done, they found the duke of Monmouth so enraged at this counsel, as well as lord Shaftesbury, that the two earls saw no way but to ruin both, and throw them quite out of the king's affairs; which they did for that time, and brought about all that the duke of York desired, for his security against the duke of Monmouth."

• His grace had improved every day in the affections of the people, and by his zeal in the prosecution of the popish plot, and his joining heartily with those members of both houses, who were thought the best protestants, and the greatest patriots, the duke of York

was extremely jealous that his grace began to cast an eye upon the crown, a report having been spread, that the king had been lawfully married to his mother. Therefore the duke of York prevailed with his majesty to make a declaration in writing, solemnly denying his having been married to the mother of the duke of Monmouth; which was printed by his special command, and dated at Whitehall, March 3, 1678-9. Sir William Temple says, "he could not but wonder how the duke had been able in so few days to get so great a victory," as to disgrace the duke of Monmouth, to get him removed from all his places, and to order him abroad.

' As the duke of York was ordered to Brussels, the duke of Monmouth chose his residence at Utrecht; but hearing of the sudden return of the former to England, on the 12th of October, he thought fit, without leave, to follow his royal highness, and on the 27th of November, 1679, arrived at London about midnight; where, on the news of his arrival being spread, the bells rung, and bonfires were made through the city and suburbs.

' The duke, coming back from Holland without leave, did not venture to appear at court. He thought that he had reason to be discontented at the return of the duke of York, who had the king's permission to come over; and, putting himself at the head of those who thought the intermission of parliaments a great grievance, resolved to make the necessity the greater that parliament should sit at the time appointed. And the lord Russell, with other lords, went to Westminster-hall publicly, on June 16th, 1680; and there, in the court of King's Bench, presented the duke of

York as a popish recusant. This bold step against the duke was looked on as entering into the desperate resolution of either ruining his highness or themselves; and the duke of Monmouth's friends, as sir William Temple writes, now drove on violently, not doubting but he would soon be in the duke of York's place. On the 2d of November they brought in the bill of exclusion, wherein they engaged, not only, as they professed, upon opinion of national ends, but likewise upon that of self-preservation, having broken irreparably all measures with his royal highness.

‘ The dissolution of two parliaments in a short space of time, and of the last in so abrupt a manner, raised a general spirit of discontent and distrust throughout the kingdom. In London there was a strong party of malecontents, so turbulent in their disposition, that they had meditated plans of resistance. Several of the individuals of this party, among whom was the duke of Monmouth, entered into the conspiracy, known by the name of the *Rye-house Plot*, which, it was asserted, had for its object the assassination of the king and the duke of York. Soon after the discovery of this conspiracy, a proclamation was issued for apprehending the duke, who, being unwilling to be detained in custody, therefore withdrew till November 24th, when he surrendered himself; and next day the following intimation was given in the London Gazette:—

“ WHITEHALL, *November 25th.* His majesty, having this afternoon called an extraordinary council, was pleased to acquaint them, that the duke of Monmouth did last night surrender himself to Mr. Secretary Jenkins, having before writ a very submissive letter to

his majesty, entirely resigning himself to his majesty's pleasure; that his majesty and his royal highness went down to Mr. Secretary's office, where the duke of Monmouth was, who shewed himself very sensible of his crime in the late conspiracy, (the Rye-house plot,) making a full declaration of it; and that having shewed an extraordinary penitence for the same, and made a particular submission to his royal highness, for his misbehaviour to him, his majesty and his royal highness received so much satisfaction, that, upon his royal highness's desire and entreaty, his majesty was pleased to pardon the said duke, and thereupon did order Mr. Attorney-general to stop farther proceedings against him; but ordered he should proceed, notwithstanding, against all the rest of the conspirators."

'That the duke of Monmouth was a great favourite, and extremely popular in the west of England, in the latter end of the reign of Charles II. is well known. He was brave, generous, affable, and extremely handsome; constant in his friendships, just to his word, and an utter enemy to oppression and tyranny. He was easy in his nature, and fond of popular applause, which led him insensibly into all his misfortunes; but whatever might be the hidden designs of some persons with whom he was afterwards engaged, his own were noble, and chiefly aimed at the good of his country, though he was mistaken in the means to attain it. But nothing contributed more to direct the views of the nation to him, than his firm adherence to the protestant religion and interest. Of the truth of this there is the best proof in an account of a progress which he made into

the counties of Somerset and Devon, in the month of August, 1680. The conspicuous part, which he afterwards acted in Taunton, will justify us in presenting our readers with a few particulars relating to this progress, especially as some of the persons mentioned had great weight and influence in this neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup>

"In August, 1680, the duke of Monmouth went into the country to divert himself, visiting several gentlemen in the west of England, by whom he was received and entertained with a gallantry suitable to the greatness of his birth, and the relation in which he stood with his majesty; incredible numbers of people flocking from all the adjacent parts, to see this great champion of the English nation, who had been so successful against both the Dutch, French, and Scots. He went first into Wiltshire, and was pleased to honour the worthy 'squire Thynne' with his company for some days. From thence he went to Mr. Speke's,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This account is extracted from a very scarce little book, entitled, "An Historical Account of the Heroick Life and Magnanimous Actions of the most Illustrious Protestant Prince, James, Duke of Monmouth. London, 1683."

<sup>2</sup> At the noble mansion of Long-Leat, possessed by Mr. Thynne's lineal descendant, the present marquess of Bath.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Speke lived at Dillington-park near Ilminster. There is now standing in this park a Spanish chestnut tree, measuring (at three feet from the ground) upwards of twenty-six feet in circumference. The old branches have mostly been removed by the ravages of time; but there are others attached to it, which produce large timber, as well as a quantity of fruit annually. This immense tree is not only remarkable for its great bulk, but also for having afforded shade to the duke of Monmouth, and his attendants, who took refreshment under it, while at Mr. Speke's, in his progress through the west.

in Somersetshire, in which progress he was caressed with the joyful acclamations of the country people, who came from all parts, twenty miles about; the lanes and hedges being every where lined with men, women, and children, who, with incessant shouts, cried, "God bless king Charles and the protestant duke." In some towns and parishes, through which he passed, they strewed the streets and highways, where he was to pass, with herbs and flowers, especially at Ilchester and Petherton; others presenting him with bottles of wine. When he came within ten miles of Mr. Speke's, he was met by two thousand persons on horseback, whose number still increased as they drew nearer to Mr. Speke's; and when they arrived there, they were reputed to be twenty thousand; wherefore they were forced to break down several perches of his park pales to enlarge their passage to the house, where his grace and all his numerous company were entertained, and treated in an extraordinary manner.

"On the 26th, he went to Brimpton, being met on the road by a great company of gentry, and the country people, who conducted him to sir John Sydenham's',

<sup>1</sup> Brimpton-house, situated about two miles from Yeovil, is a striking specimen of the skill of Inigo Jones in domestic architecture. It contains a very handsome suite of apartments, well calculated for the reception of so numerous a company, and for the display of "a noble and splendid dinner." There is a very accurate bird's-eye view, by Kyp, of this mansion and the adjacent country, taken at the time that it was the property of sir Philip Sydenham, the immediate heir of sir John Sydenham above-mentioned. Sir Philip was a man of a very singular turn of mind, occasioned in a great measure by a disappointment in love. He squandered an estate of four thousand pounds per annum, and at last alienated Brimpton,

where he was entertained at a noble and splendid dinner. The next day, he went to Barrington,<sup>1</sup> where he was pleased to honour Mr. William Stroud with his company at dinner, the entertainment being nothing inferior to what his grace had met withal at other places. After dinner, he went to Chard, where he arrived about five in the afternoon, attended with a train of five thousand horsemen; and there he was met and welcomed by a croud of men, women, and children, who had not a mute among them, but were almost all of them made deaf with their own shouts and acclamations of joy. His grace lay there that night, being treated at a very splendid supper: he lodged at the house of Mr. Prideaux. The next day, after being entertained at a sumptuous breakfast, he rode to Ilminster, where he dined; and in the afternoon went to White Lackington, where he lay that night; and the day following, which was Sunday, his grace observed the sabbath with religious care, and went to Ilminster church. On the 30th, he went to Colyton, where he

the sole remains of his property, to his cousin, Humphrey Sydenham, member for Exeter, reserving four hundred pounds a year for his life. It passed, after an intermediate sale, to Francis Fane, of Bristol, merchant, who bequeathed it to his brother Thomas Fane, who succeeded to the title, on the death of John, seventh earl of Westmoreland, in which family the estate still continues. It is strange that, although there are two prints of sir Philip Sydenham, (the one a beautiful engraving by Smith, the other a smaller print by Vertue,) there is no mention made of him in Granger's Biographical History, or in Noble's Continuation of that work.

<sup>1</sup> Barrington, situate about four miles from Ilminster, was built by one of the family of the Phillips's, and much resembles, in external appearance, their ancient seat at Montacute.

was entertained by sir Walter Yonge. The next day, he went to Otterton, where he was entertained and lodged by Mr. Dukes. From thence he went to Exeter, and was met by the citizens and the people of all the adjacent parts, to the number of about twenty thousand persons. But that which was more remarkable was the appearance of a brave company of stout young men, all clothed in linen waistcoats and drawers, white and harmless, having not so much as a stick in their hands. They were in number about nine hundred or a thousand. They went three miles out of the city to meet his grace, where they were drawn up on a little hill, and divided into two parts; in which order they attended the duke's coming, who, when he came, rid up first between them, and then round each company; after which, they united, and went hand in hand, in order, before the duke, into the city, where he was no sooner arrived, but an universal shout from all parts echoed forth his welcome; the numerous concourse of people, the incredible and amazing acclamations, and the universal joy which then filled the whole city, far exceeding the art of my pen to describe. From thence he returned to Mr. Speke's, whither the whole neighbouring country flocked again to see and admire him, not being enough satisfied with their former sight. From thence he went, the next day, to Mr. Harvey's,\* near Yeovil, where he dined; and in the afternoon he rode to 'squire

\* Michael Harvey, esq. of Clifton, in Dorsetshire, about two miles from Yeovil. The house, which is stated, in Hutchins's History of Dorset, to have been "a large and stately pile of building," has been pulled down, with the exception of a small part, which is appropriated for the residence of the farmer, who rents the estate of the marquess of Anglesea, its present owner.



Thynne's, people flocking from all the towns and villages thereabout, to Hordden Hill, where they attended the duke's coming ; and after they had, by loud acclamations, proclaimed his welcome amongst them, and expressed their joy for his safe return, they took their leaves of him, returning his grace their humble and hearty thanks for that kind visit, and for his having condescended to accept of their plain, but true-hearted entertainment. From thence he returned to London, wonderfully pleased with the noble and generous entertainment he had met with at the several places where he came, every place striving to outvie each other. That which made them the more joyful to see his grace, was, their having never had the happiness to see his majesty or any of the royal family in these parts before."

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The popish party about the duke of York continued to incense him against the duke of Monmouth ; and though his majesty was very desirous of compromising the breach between them, and was even in hopes of effecting it, yet Monmouth well knew he could never hope for the duke of York's favour. When, therefore, by the influence of his royal highness, his grace was obliged to retire into Holland, his royal father followed him with proofs of the affection, which, though often dissembled, he always bore him. He furnished him with money, sent him kind messages, wrote to him with his own hand, formed the scheme of recalling him to court ; and nothing pleased the king more, than the noble reception afforded him by a prince of his blood, in a foreign country. During his absence,

the king could not bear any reflections to be cast on him ; and some officious courtiers found to their cost, that to aggravate Monmouth's faults was not the way to advance their own influence and fortune. These things operated upon the minds of many persons, making a strong impression in favour of the legitimacy of the duke's birth, insomuch that, in the year 1675, it was judged necessary to guard against the consequences of this belief by parliamentary provisions. For, in a bill for the preservation of his majesty's person and government, instructions were given to insert a clause, declaring it high treason for any person to assert the legitimacy of James, duke of Monmouth, or his title or pretensions to the crown. This bill was read twice, and referred to a committee of the whole house. The committee were to prepare a clause, that none should move, in either house of parliament, for the alteration of the succession of the crown in the right line. It passed the Commons, but the House of Lords refused it their assent.

The personal endowments of the duke of Monmouth, independently of the presumptive evidence of the legitimacy of his birth, rendered him the favourite of his royal father, and the minion of the people. He had learned the art of war, as we have before observed, under the great Turenne, and had signalized his valour at Mons and Maestricht. The jealousy with which he was viewed by the duke of York, as a competitor for the crown, and the unbounded zeal of the latter for popery, prompted the duke to attempt the conversion of Monmouth to the catholic faith. With this view he exerted his unceasing endeavours with the king, to prevail with

him, to require of the prince to turn papist. The king, from his own partiality to the Romish religion, and to oblige his brother, sent the duke of Monmouth to France, with an express command to reconcile himself to the church of Rome. The duke, however, was not to be moved from the protestant faith, either by the seducing influence of France, or the commands of his royal father.

These causes united to form a strong party in favour of the duke of Monmouth, and had his recall taken place, it may be apprehended, that his influence would have become considerable. But the death of Charles the second defeated the design, and blasted the wishes of the people, and the hopes of Monmouth. The prince of Orange, at whose court he was, to avoid displeasing the duke of York, who had then ascended the throne, dismissed Monmouth, who retired to Brussels, with an intention to take up his residence at Vienna, or some court in Germany. He was earnestly dissuaded from this design, and urged, instead of wandering about, to set himself to deliver his country, and to raise his party and his friends, who were likely to suffer severely for their adherence to him. A person was sent into England, to ascertain the state of the public mind, and whether the people were disposed to encourage an invasion.

The persons, who formed the duke of Monmouth's council, were, Wade, Ferguson, and some others, particularly Ford, lord Grey, and the lady Wentworth, who followed him from Brussels desperately in love with him. Both he and she, says bishop Burnet, "came to fancy, that he being married to his duchess,

while he was indeed of the age of consent, but not capable of a free one, the marriage was null. So they lived together, and she had heated both herself and him with such enthusiastical conceits, that they fancied what they did was approved of GOD." Another person, who influenced Monmouth's determination, was a Scottish gentleman, Andrew Fletcher, of Saltoun. These persons were very urgent with the duke of Monmouth to make an attempt. They fancied, that the city of London was disposed to revolt; and were very sanguine in their expectation, that all the west of England, as soon as he appeared, would flock to his standard. The king, they conceived, would be thrown into so great perplexity by his landing, and be so engaged in measures for the security of his own person against tumults near him, that he would not be able to send any forces against him, and the duke would have time to form his army. To the duke himself the scheme appeared a very hazardous one; nor could Fletcher, though he was set on the design in general, entertain any hopes from it. The duke was more backward to this enterprize, because, while he was in Holland, he had devoted himself to study; and, from the review of past follies, and the consideration of the difficulties that lay in the way, had begun to contract a disinclination to the pursuits of ambition. This appears from a letter he wrote to a friend a little before his attempt in the west, wherein he thus expressed himself:—"For GOD's sake, think of the improbabilities that lie naturally in our way; and let us not, by struggling with our chains, make them straiter and heavier. For my part, I will run the

hazard of being thought any thing, rather than a rash, inconsiderate man. And, to tell you my thoughts, without disguise, I am now so much in love with a retired life, that I am never like to be fond of *making a bustle in the world again.*"

But notwithstanding he had formed this turn of mind, and had such sentiments concerning the undertaking, the importunities and ardour of those, who were about him, prevailed with him to act contrary to his own sense and reason. He had been obliged, soon after he had withdrawn to Brussels, to leave that place, at the requisition of the governor of the Netherlands, who had been requested by king James to command the duke to depart from the Spanish dominions.<sup>1</sup> Upon receiving this notice, he privately returned to Holland.<sup>2</sup> Here he made such prepara-

<sup>1</sup> The duke had not been long at Brussels, before the marquis de Grana, governor of the Netherlands, received a letter from king James, charging his grace with high treason, and requesting that he might be secured. Upon which the marquis gave Monmouth notice to depart the Spanish dominions forthwith.—*Collins's Peerage*, 1812, vol. iii. p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> The duke retired from Brussels to Amsterdam ; and there, by the assistance of his friends, who judged the opportunity favourable for his enterprize, hired privately a ship of war of thirty-two guns, and three smaller vessels as tenders. *He was also secretly prompted by some, who looked upon him as an obstacle to their own ambitious projects, and, for that reason, were careful that he should only be equipped in such a manner, as might rather ensure his destruction than success.* However, the preparations did not escape the vigilance of colonel Bevil Skelton, king James's envoy at the Hague, who extorted an order from the States to arrest Monmouth ; but his grace had previous notice, and all that colonel Skelton could effect was to detain one of the tenders, which was not ready to put to sea, when the duke, upon the aforesaid notice, sailed from the Texel with the other ships.—*Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 528.

tions, as his situation, and the precipitancy with which the design was conducted, allowed. As no money was sent him from England, the duke pawned his jewels to purchase arms, and freight his vessels, which amounted only to three ships; one of thirty-two guns, which carried most of the men, and two others, destined to convey their ammunition. The whole company consisted but of eighty-two persons.

On the 24th of May, 1685, (O. S.) they left Amsterdam about two o'clock, being Sunday morning, in a lighter, and sailed for the Texel, whither their vessels had been sent before; but the winds proving adverse, they did not arrive there till Saturday night, when they all went aboard. Here the ship of war, of thirty-two guns, on board which was the duke, was arrested by order of the States of Amsterdam, at the requisition of the English envoy; but they broke through the arrest, and, on Sunday morning, at break of day, set sail for England. For most part of the time they were at sea, the winds proved cross, so that their passage from Amsterdam to Lyme wanted but two days of three weeks. The duke and his company landed at Lyme, on Thursday, the 11th of June, not only without any opposition, but with every expression of joy. As soon as Monmouth came ashore, he called for silence, and invited them to join in returning thanks to God, for their preservation at sea. They fell on their knees on the sand, and he offered their devout acknowledgments in a short ejaculation. They then, well armed, entered the town.<sup>1</sup> Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday

<sup>1</sup> He met with such bad weather, that he was nineteen days at sea, and yet was never discovered by the English ships that lay in

morning were spent in enlisting men, who in numbers flocked to his standard.' On Saturday night, about ten o'clock, three hundred men were sent to Bridport, to storm that town early the next morning. They did this, and took many prisoners ; but being attacked by some of the king's forces, who were lying about a wood, they were forced to retreat, three or four being killed on each side, and eight of the royal party being taken.

Mr. Fox, in his history of the reign of James the second, thus mentions the transactions at Bridport. " It being absolutely necessary to dislodge some troops

the channel to intercept him. On Thursday, June 11th, he appeared off Lyme, and went ashore about eight in the evening. As soon as his men were landed, he commanded silence, and falling on his knees, he implored the protection of the ALMIGHTY in a short prayer ; then drawing his sword, he led his men a back way into the town, and set up his standard in the market-place, without any opposition. After which he mustered his little company, who were all well armed, and in good equipage. Being asked " whom they were for ? " they declared " for the protestant religion." The chief who accompanied him were, Ford, lord Grey, a German count, colonel Holmes, colonel Matthews, major Perrott, captain Annealey, captain Hewling, Mr. Joseph Tyley, Mr. Wade, Dr. Temple, and Mr. Robert Ferguson, in all about eighty-two officers, and others to the number of one hundred and fifty.—*Collins's Peerage*, vol. iii. p. 529.—*Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts*, p. 701.

Monmouth's reception was, among the lower ranks, cordial ; and for some days, at least, if not weeks, there seemed to have been more foundation for the sanguine hopes of lord Grey, and others, his followers, than the duke had supposed.—*Fox's Hist. of James II.* p. 225.

<sup>1</sup> Oldmixon says, that above fourteen thousand men tendered their services to Monmouth before he marched from Lyme ; and that above six thousand of them were regimented, though not completely armed.—*History of the Stuarts*, p. 701.

which had been thrown into Bridport, a detachment of three hundred men was made for that purpose, which had the most complete success, notwithstanding the cowardice of lord Grey, who commanded them. This nobleman, who had been so instrumental in persuading his friend to the invasion, upon the first appearance of danger, is said to have left the troops whom he commanded, and to have sought his own personal safety in flight. The troops carried Bridport, to the shame of the commander who had deserted them, and returned to Lyme.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Buchan, in his life of Fletcher of Saltoun, gives the following particulars relating to lord Grey's cowardice at Bridport, and the circumstance of Fletcher's killing the owner of the horse :—

“ Soon after their landing at Lyme, lord Grey was sent with a small party to disperse a few of the militia, and ran for it ; but his men stood, and the militia retreated. Lord Grey brought back a false report, which was soon contradicted by the men, whom their leader had abandoned, coming back to quarters in good order. The unfortunate duke of Monmouth was struck with this, (says Burnet,) when he found that the person on whom he depended most, and for whom he designed the command of the cavalry, had already made himself infamous by his cowardice. He intended to join Fletcher with him in that command ; but Fletcher, having been sent out on another party, engaged in a scuffle, in which he had the misfortune to kill the mayor of Lyme against the laws of war, in the sudden heat of passion, on account of contumelious language used to him by the mayor, on reclaiming a horse of his that had been impressed by Fletcher's party. This unguarded, unsoldierly, and unjustifiable act of violence must have rendered his future services on the expedition, of little consideration to Monmouth, but it was not the cause of his leaving the little army. The account given by Fletcher himself of his general conduct at this time, to the late earl marshal of Scotland, was, that he had been induced to join the duke of Monmouth on the principles of the manifestoes in England and Scotland, particularly by the laws promised for the permanent



‘ It is related by Ferguson, that Monmouth said to Matthews, ‘ What shall I do with lord Grey ? ’ to which the other answered, ‘ that he was the only general in Europe who would ask such a question ; ’ intending, no doubt, to reproach the duke with the excess to which he pushed his characteristic virtues of mildness and forbearance. That these virtues formed a part of his character is most true, and the personal friendship, in which he lived with Grey, would incline him still more to the exercise of them upon this occasion ; but it is to be remembered also, that the delinquent was, in respect of rank, property, and perhaps too of talent, by far the most considerable man he had with him, and therefore that prudential motives might concur to deter a general from proceeding to violent measures with such a person, especially in a civil war, where the discipline of an armed party cannot be conducted upon the same system as that of a regular army, serving in a foreign war. Monmouth’s disappointment in lord Grey was aggravated by the loss of Fletcher of Saltoun, who, in a sort of scuffle that ensued, upon his being reproached for having seized

security of civil and religious liberty, and of the protestant religion, and the calling of a general congress of delegates from the people at large, to form a free constitution of government, and not to pretend to the throne upon any claim, except the free choice of the representatives of the people. When Monmouth was proclaimed king at Taunton, Fletcher saw the deception, and resolved to proceed no farther in his engagements, which he concluded from that moment as treason against the just rights of the nation, and treachery on the part of Monmouth. Finding himself no longer capable of being useful, he left Taunton, and embarked on board a vessel for Spain. — *Earl of Buchan’s Life of Fletcher*, p. 12, 13, and note p. 12, 13.

a horse belonging to a man of the country, had the misfortune to kill the owner. Monmouth, however, unwilling, thought himself obliged to dismiss him; and thus, while a fatal concurrence of circumstances forced him to part with the man he esteemed, and to retain him whom he despised, he found himself at once disappointed of the support of the two persons upon whom he had most relied.\*

More effectually to draw the people to his interest, the duke of Monmouth issued a manifesto, entitled, "The declaration of James, duke of Monmouth, and the noblemen, gentlemen, and others, now in arms, for the defence and vindication of the protestant religion, and the laws, rights, and privileges of England."

\* History of James II. p. 227, 228.

\* The first step taken by the invader was to issue a proclamation, which he caused to be read in the market-place at Taunton. This proclamation appears to have been well received, and the numbers that came in to him were very considerable; but his means of arming them were limited, nor had he much confidence, for the purpose of any important military operation, in men unused to discipline, and wholly unacquainted with the art of war. With money he was wholly unprovided, nor does it appear, whatever may have been the inclination of some considerable men, such as lords Macolesfield, Brandon, Delamere, and others, that any persons of that description were engaged to join in his enterprize. On the one hand, his reception had been above his hopes, and his recruits more numerous than could be expected, or than he was able to furnish with arms; while, on the other hand, the forces in arms against him consisted chiefly in a militia, formidable neither from numbers nor discipline, and moreover suspected of disaffection. The present moment, therefore, seemed to open the most favourable opportunity for enterprize of any that was like to occur; but the unfortunate Monmouth judged otherwise, and, as if he were to defend rather than attack, directed his chief policy to the avoiding of a general action.—*Fox's Hist. of James II.* p. 225, 226.

The preamble of this proclamation set forth, "that the end of government was the happiness and security of the governed; that the English constitution was so wisely and happily formed, as to entrust the prince with all the power necessary for the welfare of the people or his own protection, and yet so to limit and restrain him, that he could not, without the violation of his oath and the rules of government, do any hurt; that, according to the primitive frame of the constitution, the rights reserved to the people contributed to the honour and greatness of the king, and his prerogatives to their protection and safety; that, as all human things were subject to perversion as well as decay, so the English government had often been wrested from its first institution; and that it had been very recently broken, and nothing left unattempted for converting a limited monarchy into an absolute tyranny."

"It then taxed the whole course of the life of the duke of York with being a continued conspiracy against the reformed religion, and the rights of the nation. It particularly charged him with the burning of London, instigating a confederacy with France and a war with Holland, and fomenting the popish plot. It imputed to him the murder of sir Edmundsbury Godfrey, and the assassination of the earl of Essex. It accused him of having, after he had ascended the throne, made an open profession of popery, and invited into the kingdom multitudes of priests and jesuits; of trampling upon the laws concerning property, in two proclamations, requiring the collection of the customs, and continuing an excise which was to have expired at the late king's death; of suborning the judges; of advancing to the bench those whom parliament had branded for

pervverting the laws; of packing juries; of framing illegal charters; and of advising and procuring the prorogation and dissolution of parliament, in order to prevent, while he was duke of York, an enquiry into his crimes.

“ It therefore proclaimed war against him as a murderer, and an assassinater of innocent men, a traitor to the nation, and a tyrant over the people.

“ While it arraigned the conduct and government of the king, in strong and severe terms, it held forth the views and designs of the duke of Monmouth; who, in the most solemn manner, pledged himself to restore and preserve the balance and temperament of the constitution; to establish and secure the protestant religion; not to destroy or make war on any, even the papists, for their religion; to maintain the rights of parliament; to hold annual parliaments without any dissolution, or prorogation, within the year; to debar ignorant, scandalous, and mercenary men from the administration of justice, and to renew to the judges, the ancient tenure of their places, that they should hold them *quamdiu se bene gesserint*; to restore to boroughs and cities their old charters; to repeal the corporation and militia acts; to reverse all sentences founded on any of the penal statutes against protestant dissenters; to prosecute the duke of York, till he was brought to suffer the punishment due to the murder of the late king by poison, with which the declaration charged him; and to consent to, and promote, the passing such laws, as might, for the future, put it out of the power of any person on the throne to deprive the subjects of their rights; while he would leave his own title to the

crown to be decided by the wisdom, justice, and authority of a parliament, legally chosen, and acting with freedom.

"It further declared an approbation of the conduct of the nobility, gentry, and commons in Scotland, who, on the like motives, had then taken up arms; and it required and enjoined all sincere protestants and true Englishmen to afford their utmost aid and succour for dethroning the tyrant, James, duke of York; concluding, "Now let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our GOD; and the Lord do that which seemeth good unto him."

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'Having given an account of the duke of Monmouth's exertions during his stay at Lyme, in support of the cause in which he had embarked, we will here stop, and take a brief view of the measures adopted by king James, to counteract and defeat the object of his invasion.

'Upon Saturday, the 13th of June, 1685, two days after Monmouth had landed, the king laid before the two houses of parliament a letter from Alford, the mayor of Lyme,<sup>1</sup> giving a particular account of the duke's landing there, and taking possession of the town; and acquainted the commons, that two messengers, who brought the letter, had been examined upon oath, before the privy council. The commons examined the messengers, who "testified the truth of the matter;" but the lords did not. Both houses agreed

<sup>1</sup> Oldmixon says, "the news was brought to London by Thorold, mayor of Lyme, and Douch, a custom-house officer, who were both examined by the house of commons."—*Hist. of the Stuarts*, p. 191.

to address the king, and the address of the lords thanked him *for imparting the intelligence*. The commons, having voted the address, ordered a bill to be brought in, for the attainder of the duke of Monmouth, without any further examination of witnesses. On Monday, the 15th, the bill was read three times, and passed, and sent up to the lords; where it was also read three times on the same day, *without the production of any evidence*, and passed; and on the next day, Tuesday, the 16th of June, it received the royal assent. Bishop Burnet says, that the earl of Anglesea opposed this bill in the lords, because he thought the evidence not sufficient to authorise so severe a sentence.

‘It may readily be conceived, that the mode in which this act was passed occasioned much conversation at the time; more especially, if what sir Edward Seymour said in a debate, on sir John Fenwick’s bill, is true, that this bill against the duke of Monmouth was the first bill of attainder, which had ever originated in the house of commons, where witnesses could not be examined upon oath.’

By order of the parliament, then devoted to the king, the duke of Monmouth’s declaration was burnt by the common hangman; which served only to make people more eager to read it. The court, fearful what impressions it would make in favour of the duke’s

‘The bill, being despatched by the commons, was sent up to the lords by sir John Fenwick, who was afterwards executed for high treason himself. This is a remarkable parliamentary incident, for sir John, who was attainted in the succeeding reign, was hardly and unjustly dealt with, in the bill then brought in against him.

‘*Heywood’s Vindication of Mr. Fox’s History of James II.* appx. p. 86.

design, published a proclamation, whereby it was made treason to spread the said declaration. Another proclamation was issued, promising a reward of five thousand pounds to any one who should secure him dead or alive.\* 'The duke of Albemarle, as lord lieutenant of the county of Devon, was sent down to raise the militia, and to lead them against him. 'This was a service, to which they were greatly averse: many deserted from it, and all were cold in it. 'The gentle and conciliating manners of Monmouth won the hearts of the people; and the whole country was open to him for nearly a fortnight.

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On the Monday after Monmouth had landed at Lyme, he marched to Axminster; and, by this time, his forces amounted to two thousand foot and three hundred horse. After a march of about two miles, they discovered the duke of Albemarle, with his militia, consisting of four thousand men, who designed to take up his quarters that night in the same town. He had conducted his forces from Exeter, with an intention to lay siege to Lyme. The duke of Monmouth, on finding that he was so near, endeavoured to attach him to his interest, and wrote him a letter signed "JAMES REX;" to which the duke of Albemarle replied, "that he never had been a rebel, nor ever would be one." This answer cut off all hopes of an union; and the duke of Monmouth advanced to the town in good order, lined the hedges, and planted his field-pieces, expecting nothing less than a battle. But the duke

\* Oldmixon calls this a reward to any one who would *assassinate* the duke of Monmouth.

of Albemarle, when he was even within a quarter of a mile of Axminster, reflecting that he was at the head of a militia only, who were not disposed to fight against Monmouth, retreated ; and his men supposing that they were pursued, the retreat was not effected without much confusion and disorder. Had Monmouth followed them, he might have taken all their arms, increased his own forces, and have marched, without opposition, to the gates of Exeter. But, when it was debated whether to pursue them or not, the duke, cautious of risking the event of a battle in so early a stage, distrusting the skill of forces scarcely disciplined, and solicitous to make up into the country as fast as possible, with the sanguine hope of a growing support, determined against the measure, and proceeded to Taunton ; the country, all the way, filling the air with their acclamations, and praying GOD to give success to his arms.<sup>1</sup>

‘ Monmouth does not appear to have marched from Lyme with a view to any step of importance, but rather to avoid the danger which he apprehended from the movements of the Devonshire and Somerset militia, whose object it seemed to be to shut him up in Lyme. In his first day’s march, he had opportunities of engaging, or rather of pursuing, each of those bodies, who severally retreated from his forces ; but conceiving it to be his business, as he said, not to fight, but to march on, he went through Axminster, and encamped in a strong piece of ground between that town and Chard, to which place he proceeded on the

<sup>1</sup> On his march, he is said to have touched several for the king’s evil.



following day. According to Wade's narrative, which appears to afford by far the most authentic account of these transactions, here it was that the first proposition was made for proclaiming Monmouth king. Ferguson made the proposal, and was supported by lord Grey; but it was *easily run down*, as Wade expresses it, *by those who were against it*, and whom, therefore, we must suppose to have formed a very considerable majority of the persons deemed of sufficient importance to be consulted on such an occasion.<sup>1</sup>

'On Thursday, June 18th, Monmouth and his party entered Taunton;' "where," says Mr. Fox,<sup>2</sup> "as well for the tenour of former occurrences, as from the zeal and number of the protestant dissenters, who formed a great portion of its inhabitants, he had every reason to expect the most favourable reception." His expectations were not disappointed. The inhabitants, of the upper as well as the lower classes, vied with each other in testifying their affection for his person, and their zeal for his cause. While the latter rent the air with applauses and acclamations, the former opened their houses to him and his followers, and furnished his army with necessaries and supplies of every kind. His way was strowed with flowers; the windows were thronged with spectators, all anxious to participate

<sup>1</sup> Fox's History of James II. p. 228, 229.

<sup>2</sup> He was received with such general exultation at Taunton, that one would have thought, says Oldmixon, the people's wits were flown away in the flights of their joy. The houses and doors were adorned with green boughs, herbs, and flowers, and there was hardly a hat to be seen without a green bough, the mark of distinction used by the duke's men.—*History of the Stuarts*, p. 704.

<sup>3</sup> History of James II. p. 229.

in what the warm feelings of the moment made them deem a triumph. Husbands pointed out to their wives, mothers to their children, the brave and lovely hero, who was destined to be the deliverer of his country. The beautiful lines, which Dryden makes Achitophel, in his highest strain of flattery, apply to this unfortunate nobleman, were in this instance literally verified :—

“ Thee saviour, thee the nation’s vows confess,  
And, never satisfied with seeing, bless;  
Swift, unbespoken poms thy steps proclaim,  
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.”

On the next day, Friday, twenty-six young maids, of the best families in the town, presented him with colours wrought by them for the purpose, and made at the expense of the townsmen. In the procession made on this occasion, Miss Sarah Blake was the leader of these youthful persons, carrying in one hand a naked sword, and in the other a small curious bible, which she delivered to the duke, addressing him at the same time in a short speech. The duke received these emblematical expressions of the attachment of the town, and of their expectations from him, with great pleasure; and assured her, that “ he came now into the field, with a design to defend the truths contained therein, and to seal it with his blood, if there should be an occasion for it.”

‘ In such circumstances, it is no wonder that his army increased; and, exclusively of individual recruits, he was here strengthened by the arrival of colonel Bassett

‘ Pitt’s New Martyrology, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, p. 251, 252.—Fox’s History of James II. p. 230.

with a considerable corps. But in the midst of these apparently prosperous circumstances, some of them of such importance to the success of his enterprize, all of them highly flattering to his feelings, he did not fail to observe that one favourable symptom, and that too of the most decisive nature, was still wanting. None of the considerable families, not a single nobleman, scarcely any gentleman of rank or consequence, in the counties through which he passed, had declared in his favour. Popular applause is undoubtedly sweet; and not only so, it often furnishes most powerful means to the genius that knows how to make use of them. But Monmouth well knew, that without the countenance and assistance of a proportion, at least, of the higher ranks in the country, there was, for an undertaking like his, little prospect of success. He could not but have remarked, that the habits and prejudices of the English people are, in a great degree, aristocratical; nor had he before him, nor indeed have we had since his time, one single example of an insurrection that was successful, unaided by the ancient families and great landed proprietors. He must have felt this the more, because, in former parts of his political life, he had been accustomed to act with such coadjutors; and it is highly probable, that if lord Russel had been alive, and could have appeared at the head of one hundred only of his western tenantry, such a reinforcement would have inspired him with more real confidence, than the thousands who individually flocked to his standard.\*

\* But though Russell was no more, there were not

\* Fox's Hist. of James II. p. 231.

wanting, either in the counties through which the duke passed, or in other parts of the kingdom, many noble and wealthy families, who were attached to the principles of the whigs. To account for their neutrality, and, if possible, to persuade them to a different conduct, was naturally among his principal concerns. Their present coldness might be imputed to the indistinctness of his declaration, with respect to what was intended to be the future government. Men zealous for monarchy might not choose to embark without some certain pledge, that their favourite form should be preserved. They would also expect to be satisfied with respect to the person, whom their arms, if successful, were to place upon the throne. To promise, therefore, the continuance of a monarchical establishment, and to designate the future monarch, seemed to be necessary for the purpose of acquiring aristocratical support. Whatever might be the intrinsic weight of this argument, it easily made its way with Monmouth in his present situation. The aspiring temper of mind, which is the natural consequence of popular favour and success, produced in him a disposition to listen to any suggestion which tended to his elevation and aggrandizement; and when he could persuade himself, upon reasons specious at least, that the measure which would most gratify his aspiring desires would be, at the same time, a stroke of the soundest policy, it is not to be wondered at, that it was immediately and impatiently adopted. Urged therefore by these mixed motives, and by the importunity of some who were in his councils, he assumed, while at Taunton, the title of KING.\*

\* Fox's History of James II. p. 232.

It would appear that Monmouth was himself averse to this measure, and that he was prevailed upon by Ferguson and lord Grey to adopt it, for the purpose of preventing, in case of the failure of his attempt, the ruin of his adherents, on the ground, that, if he declared himself king, his partizans might be sheltered by the statute made in the reign of Henry VII. in favour of those who should obey a king *de facto*.<sup>\*</sup> On this point Welwood<sup>a</sup> observes, that he heard Rambold say openly at his execution in Scotland, upon account of the earl of Argyle's invasion, "*that Monmouth had broken his word with them, in declaring himself king.*" Different views, it is judged, governed those who advised him. Some thought by it to make the breach between king James and him irreconcilable, and, by placing one against the other, to pave the way for a commonwealth. Others were undoubtedly actuated by unfeigned zeal for his honour, and a persuasion that he was the lawful heir to the crown.

It being the general cry of the army and the

<sup>\*</sup> Wellwood says, (Memoirs, p. 148.) that "It was importunity alone that prevailed with Monmouth to take that step; and he was inflexible till it was told him, that the only way to provide against the ruin of those that should come to his assistance, in case he failed, was to declare himself king, that they might be sheltered under the statute of Henry VII. made in favour of those that should obey a king *de facto*." To corroborate this, the earl of Argyle declared, that the duke of Monmouth pledged his word to him in Holland, *that he would pretend to no more than to act as GENERAL OF THE FORCES that should join him.*—Collins's *Peerage*, vol. iii. p. 530.

The duke renewed this promise at Lyme, to Mr. Lark, the baptist minister there, who took the command of a troop of his horse, and to the republicans who came in to him, and who were the major part of his followers.—*Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts*, p. 702.

<sup>a</sup> Memoirs, p. 149.

country, he reluctantly yielded to it, and on Saturday morning, the 20th of June, was proclaimed king. This was followed in the afternoon by the issuing of three proclamations in the royal style; one setting a sum of money on king James's head; the second declaring the parliament of England a *seditionous assembly*; and the third declaring the duke of Albemarle, who had rallied his men, and lay within six miles of Taunton, a traitor, unless he laid down his arms.

‘ If this measure was in reality taken with views of policy, those views were miserably disappointed; for it does not appear that one proselyte was gained. The threats in the proclamation were received with derision by the king's army, and no other sentiments were excited by the assumption of the royal title, than those of contempt and indignation. That party, which supported the idea of a commonwealth, was dissatisfied, of course, with the principle of the measure; the favourers of hereditary right held it in abhorrence, and considered it as a kind of sacrilegious profanation; nor even among those who considered monarchy in a more rational light, and as a magistracy instituted for the good of the people, could it be at all agreeable that such a magistrate should be elected by the army that had thronged to his standard, or by the particular partiality of a provincial town. Monmouth's strength, therefore, was by no means increased by his new title, and seemed to be still limited to two descriptions of persons; first, those who, from thoughtlessness or desperation, were willing to join in any attempt at innovation; secondly, such as, directing their views to a single point, considered the destruction of James's

tyranny, and the consequent security of the protestant religion, as the objects which, at all hazards, they were bound to pursue. By assuming the title of king, his reputation both for moderation and good faith was considerably impaired, inasmuch as his present conduct was in direct contradiction to that part of his declaration, wherein he had promised to leave the future adjustment of the government, and especially the consideration of his own claims, to a parliament freely and independently chosen.

‘ The notion of improving his new levies by discipline seems to have taken such possession of Monmouth’s mind, that he overlooked the probable, or rather the certain, consequences of delay, by which the enemy would be enabled to bring into the field forces far better disciplined and appointed, than any which, even with the most strenuous and successful exertions, he could hope to oppose to them.

The duke of Monmouth continued at Taunton until Sunday morning, and then marched for Bridgwater, where he was most cordially received. According to Oldmixon, he had now with him six thousand men tolerably well armed, which was a greater number than he ever mustered at one time, during the progress of his attempt to obtain the crown. He was proclaimed in Bridgwater, at the High Cross, by Mr. Alexander Popham, then mayor, and the body corporate, in their formalities. Here his declaration was read, and the inhabitants, emulating each other in the assistance they should render him, sent all kinds of provisions to the troops, who were in a rude sort of camp in the Castle-field, close by the town. These troops consisted

of six regiments of foot, distinguished by their colours, which had the appearance of an army. He had then about one thousand cavalry, (chiefly mounted on mares and colts from the marsh,) and a life-guard of forty young men, well mounted and armed, who maintained themselves at their own charge. From his horse two good troops were selected, one commanded by captain Hewling, and the other by a gentleman whose name is not mentioned. The duke's quarters were in the castle, where king Charles II. and king James II. at several times had also their quarters. Here he raised more voluntary contributions than in any other place, chiefly by the management of Mr. Roger Hoare,<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Coleman, and other inhabitants, great friends to, and afterwards great sufferers for his cause.

‘ From Bridgwater he proceeded to Glastonbury, and thence to Wells; where he was again proclaimed king, and his declaration read. Whilst at Wells, the duke's soldiers, thinking the clergy who belonged to the cathedral, and their officers, somewhat too impertinent, took some liberties with the latter, which, says Oldmixon, was all the damage done by them.

‘ It was on this march he was alarmed by a party of the earl of Oxford's horse,<sup>2</sup> (the blues;) but all appre-

<sup>1</sup> This Roger Hoare was one of the principal merchants of Bridgwater, and it was by his management that Monmouth was proclaimed king at that town, and a military chest raised voluntarily by the inhabitants. He was ordered by Jeffreys, at his bloody assizes, to be executed with eleven others at Bridgwater; but himself and two more were reprieved under the gallows. He lived to represent that borough in several parliaments.—*Locke's Western Rebellion*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> The first forces the king sent against Monmouth were some



bensions of any material interruption were removed by an account that the militia had retreated to Bath and Bristol. From Glastonbury and Wells he went to Shepton-Mallet, where the project of an attack upon Bristol was first communicated by the duke to his officers. After some discussion, it was agreed that the attack should be made on the Gloucestershire side of the city, and with that view to pass the Avon at Keynsham, a few miles from Bristol. In their march from Shepton-Malet, the troops were again harassed in their rear by a party of horse, but lodged quietly at night at Pensford. A detachment was sent early the next morning to possess itself of Keynsham, and to repair the bridge, which might probably be broken down to prevent a passage. Upon their approach, a troop of the Gloucestershire horse militia immediately abandoned the town in great precipitation, leaving behind them two horses and one man. By break of day, the bridge, which had not been much injured, was repaired, and before noon Monmouth, having passed it with his whole army, was in full march to Bristol, which he determined to attack the ensuing night. But the weather proving rainy and

troops of the earl of Oxford's regiment, (the blues,) under the command of the lord Churchill, afterwards duke of Marlborough, who watched the duke's movements with great strictness. The duke of Albemarle headed the militia of Devonshire; the duke of Somerset the militia of that county, at Bath; the duke of Beaufort the militia of Gloucestershire, at Bristol; the earl of Pembroke the militia of Wiltshire, at Chippenham. But the king did not confide in them; and therefore sent away all his regular troops and guards, to form an army under the command of Lewis Duras, earl of Faversham.—*Collins's Peccage*, vol. lii. p. 531.

bad, it was deemed expedient to return to Keynsham,<sup>1</sup> a measure from which he expected to reap a double advantage; to procure dry and commodious quarters for the soldiers, and to lull the enemy into a false and delusive security, by a movement which bore the semblance of a retreat. The event, however, did not answer his expectation; for the troops had scarcely taken up their quarters, when they were disturbed by two parties of horse, who entered the town at two different places. A skirmish ensued, in which Monmouth lost more than twenty, killed or wounded, whereas none of the king's party were slain, and only four with their horses taken.

This skirmish arose, on one side, by the royal army approaching near to the duke's, mistaking them for their own forces; and, on the other side, by the eagerness of undisciplined men, too impetuous to wait till the enemy entered the town, when they might have taken them all prisoners. The duke was now strongly urged by his adherents, especially those who were natives of Bristol, and knew the disposition of the inhabitants, to proceed to that city. But the duke of Beaufort being there, with a garrison of about four thousand men, and the royal forces being, as it appeared, so near, he could not be persuaded to pursue

<sup>1</sup> "This false step disheartened his party, and he had no more recruits; whereas if he had entered Bristol, there being no force to oppose him but the train-bands, (who were generally for him, not only in their hearts, but publicly drinking his health,) he might have furnished himself with men, arms, and money, and thence marched into Gloucestershire, amongst the clothiers, where great numbers waited to join him, and some of good estates."—*Collins's Peerage*, vol. iii. p. 531.

this measure.' This eventually proved fatal to his cause ; for had he possessed himself of Bristol, into which he was offered to be conducted by some private ways, with the assurance, that no resistance would be made by the people, he would not have wanted either money or arms ; and with such resources as that town would have furnished, it would not have been difficult for him to have marched to London ; the king not being able to raise seven thousand men. " But GOD," says my author, " saw it not fit for us, and over-ruled our consultations, to our own ruin : " and this at the height of their prosperity.

The scheme of attacking Bristol being relinquished, they marched, in the afternoon, to Bath, to lie before it, and sent a trumpeter to demand the town. But the garrison being strong, and the people warmly attached to the royal interest, entrance was refused. Unwilling to exhaust his strength, and spend his time in sieges, the duke advanced towards Frome. On his march he was alarmed, near Philip's Norton, with the sudden appearance of a part of the king's army, under the

<sup>1</sup> On the duke's near approach to Bristol, a false alarm was made, by setting a ship on fire in the river, for the purpose of drawing the militia that way, while his friends admitted him into the city. Bishop Burnet condemns his conduct in neglecting Bristol, where he would have found much wealth, and have gained some reputation. It seems the duke, while he was in Holland, had thoughts of possessing himself of this city, or he would not have ordered a vessel, on board which he had a great number of arms, to have sailed round the Land's-end up the Severn to meet him there, which vessel was intercepted by one of the king's ships of war, commanded by captain Trevanion. This was another ill step.—*Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts*, p. 703.

duke of Grafton, who had entered the town, and lined the hedges. They fired on his men, and a brisk skirmish ensued. At length, they were beaten, with the loss of about thirty slain in the place; whereas Monmouth lost but ten in all, and a few were wounded. The royal army retreating within a mile of the town, the duke followed, and pitched about a musket-shot from it. They played their cannon on each other for some hours. The duke's forces, on this occasion, lost but one man, and, having the advantage of the ground, did great execution among their opponents. The king's forces, at length, retreated; some hundreds of them, it was said, being killed and wounded. The lord Newburgh was mortally wounded in this action, as were several other persons of distinction; and the duke of Grafton<sup>\*</sup> himself narrowly escaped with his life.

After this rencentre, the duke proceeded to Frome, where, though the people were strongly attached to his cause, disasters multiplied against him. A few days before his arrival, the arms in the place had been taken away by stratagem. Here he received the discouraging intelligence of the defeat of the earl of Argyle, who had made an attack in Scotland; and of the

<sup>\*</sup> This was Henry Fitzroy, duke of Grafton, another natural son of Charles II. and half brother to Monmouth. He was of a brave and martial spirit, was brought up to the sea, and had been in several naval expeditions. In 1687, the duke of Somerset having declined conducting the pope's nuncio to his public audience, king James II. prevailed upon the duke of Grafton to perform that ceremony, and he accordingly conducted the nuncio to Windsor. In 1690, he embarked with the earl of Marlborough for Ireland, and was at the siege of Cork, where he was mortally wounded, and died on the 9th of October, in that year.

advance of the king's forces from London, with considerable baggage and thirty field pieces.

‘It was in vain to seek for any circumstance in his affairs, that might mitigate the effect of the severe blow inflicted by this intelligence. It produced in him a state of mind but little short of despondency. He complained that all people had deserted him, and was so dejected, as hardly to have the requisite spirit for giving the necessary orders. No diversion, at least no successful diversion, had been made in his favour. It was manifest, said his more timid advisers, that the affair must terminate ill, and the only measure now to be taken was, that the duke, with his officers, should leave the army to shift for itself, and endeavour to get to the most convenient sea-port, whence they might possibly obtain a safe passage to the continent. To account for Monmouth's entertaining, even for a moment, a thought so unworthy of himself, and so inconsistent with the character for spirit he had ever maintained, & a character unimpeached even by his enemies, we must recollect the unwillingness with which he undertook this fatal expedition; that his engagement to Argyle, who was now past help, was perhaps his principal motive for embarking at that time; that it was with great reluctance he had torn himself from the arms of lady Harriet Wentworth, with whom he had so firmly persuaded himself that he could be happy in the most obscure retirement; that he believed himself weaned from ambition, which had hitherto been the only passion of his mind. It is true, that, when he once yielded to the solicitations of his friends so far as to undertake a business of such

magnitude, it was his duty, but a duty that required a stronger mind than his to execute, to discard from his thoughts all the arguments that had rendered his compliance reluctant. This proposal of disbanding was a step so pusillanimous and dishonourable, that it could not be approved by any council however composed. It was condemned by all, except colonel Venner, and was particularly inveighed against by lord Grey, who was perhaps desirous of retrieving, by bold words at least, the reputation he had lost at Bridport. Monmouth was easily persuaded to give up a plan so uncongenial to his nature, and resolved, though with little hope of success, to remain with his army, to take the chance of events, and, at the worst, to stand or fall with men, whose attachment to him had laid him under indelible obligations.

‘This resolution being taken, the first plan was to proceed to Warminster; but on the morning of his departure, hearing, on the one hand, that the king’s troops were likely to cross his march; and, on the other, being informed by a quaker before known to the duke, that there was a great club army, amounting to ten thousand men, ready to join his standard in the marshes to the westward; he altered his intention, and returned to Shepton-Malet, where he rested that night, his army being in good quarters. From Shepton-Malet he proceeded, on the first of July, to Wells, upon information that there were in that city some carriages belonging to the king’s army, and ill guarded. These he found and took, and stopped that night in the town. The following day he marched towards Bridgwater, in search of the great succour he had been taught to

expect; but found, of the promised ten thousand men, only one hundred and sixty. The army lay that night in the field, and once again entered Bridgwater, on Friday the third of July.<sup>1</sup> That the duke's men were not yet completely dispirited or out of heart, appears from the circumstance of great numbers of them going from Bridgwater to see their friends at Taunton, and other places in the neighbourhood, and almost all returning the next day according to their promise.<sup>2</sup>

#### BATTLE OF SEDGEMOOR.

Monmouth resolved to fortify himself at Bridgwater, so as to hold his ground until he should hear from London;<sup>3</sup> but the quickened march of the king's forces precipitated his fate. On Sunday morning, July 5,

<sup>1</sup> The duke of Monmouth, by his retreat to Bridgwater, grew sensible of his error in not attempting Bristol; and finding his men desert in great numbers, he determined to make a desperate push, and resolved to attack the earl of Feversham on the very first night of his encampment.—*Collins's Peerage*, vol. iii. p. 531.

<sup>2</sup> Fox's History of James II. p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> Monmouth's first thought, upon entering Bridgwater, seems to have been to fortify the town; for which purpose many hundred labourers were summoned out of the country to begin the works. The principal gentry and merchants, however, represented to him that they had not provisions to sustain a siege, and that it would be easy for the king's army to fire the town; and therefore they requested him to leave it, and thus save it from ruin.—*Rev. A. Pechell's Letter, printed in Heywood's appx. p. xxix.*

Monmouth then proposed to retreat from the king's army immediately, to march by Axbridge and Keynsham to Gloucester, and to pursue the plan, formerly rejected, of penetrating into the counties of Salop and Chester. His preparations for this march were all made, when he learnt the true situation of the royal army.—*Fox's Hist. of James II. p. 244.*

the royal army, consisting of about four thousand men, under the command of the earl of Feversham and lord Churchill, (afterwards the great duke of Marlborough,) marched from Somerton; and the same day about noon, five regiments of foot, consisting of two thousand men, encamped in Sedgemoor, in the parish of Chedzoy, under Weston. Five hundred horse took up their quarters in Weston, and one thousand five hundred militia were posted in Middlezoy and Othery, a mile or two distant from Weston. A person of Bridgwater, looking after his cattle, saw the king's army march into the moor and pitch their tents; on which he returned into the town, and informed the duke of all that he had seen. Monmouth, with lord Grey and his principal officers, immediately went upon the tower of Bridgwater church, to observe, through a telescope, the position of the royal army.\* The soldiers were perceived to be under very negligent and careless discipline, inso-much that the duke's attendants told him, "that no more was to be done, than to lock up the stable-door, and to seize the troopers in their beds."

A council of war was next held, for the purpose of considering whether it might not be adviseable to attempt to surprize the royal army by an attack in the night. The prevailing opinion was, that, if the infantry were not entrenched, the plan was worth the trial; otherwise not. Scouts were accordingly sent out

\* Monmouth, observing that lord Dunbarton's regiment, (now the royals,) of which he himself had once been colonel, and had been extremely beloved by the soldiers, was posted on that side of the camp that was proposed to be first attacked, expressed some concern at it, saying, "I know those men will fight, and, if I had them, I should not doubt of success."



to ascertain this point; and their report being that there were no entrenchments, an attack was resolved on. In pursuance of this resolution, the drums beat in Bridgwater for the duke's army to assemble in the castle-field. Several meetings were privately held, where the officers went to prayers for a blessing on their arms; some of them praying in red coats and jack-boots, a sight that had not been seen in England since the restoration.<sup>1</sup>

'About eleven o'clock, the duke's forces marched out of Bridgwater,<sup>2</sup> without beat of drum, and with all possible silence; the soldiers being strictly forbidden to fire so much as a pistol, until they entered the royal camp. Lord Grey commanded the horse, and colonel Wade the vanguard of the foot. The duke's orders were, that the horse should first advance, and, pushing into the enemy's camp, endeavour to prevent their infantry from coming together; that the cannon should follow the horse, and the foot the cannon, and draw up all in one line, and so finish what the cavalry should have begun, before the king's horse and artillery could be got in order. Their guide, Benjamin Newton, who promised to lead them by a bye-road, conducted them through Chedzoy<sup>3</sup> to a place where the rhine or ditch,

<sup>1</sup> Fox's History of James II. p. 245.—Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts.

<sup>2</sup> "About eleven o'clock at night," says Oldmixon, "I saw the duke of Monmouth ride out, attended by his life-guard of horse; and though then but a boy, observed an alteration in his look, which I did not like; for not being able to judge of the goodness or badness of his cause, I ran down with the stream, and was one of its well-wishers."

<sup>3</sup> The Rev. A. Paschall, in his letter printed in Serjeant Heywood's

behind which the king's troops were encamped, was fordable. And, though Newton knew every step of the way, either by day or night, as well as it was possible for a man to know it, and though he loved the duke of Monmouth with all his heart, yet such was his concern on this important occasion, that he became bewildered. In this state, he led the duke's troops above the ford, which otherwise would have opened a way for them into the royal camp, where the soldiers were asleep in their tents, and might, in all human probability, have been cut to pieces by the scythe-men, of whom Monmouth had five hundred; and the terror of the weapon, added to the slaughter and horror of the night, would have given the rest of the duke's forces an easy victory.

‘ Whilst Monmouth's men, says Oldmixon, were endeavouring to find the ford, captain Hucker, of Taunton, having received some disgust, on account, as it was said, of the duke's refusing to make him governor of Taunton, though he could not spare him appendix, thus describes Monmouth's march from Bridgwater to the field of battle:—“ The duke did not take the nearest way to Weston, which was three miles, but took the long causeway, and so made his march five miles long, before he could reach the king's camp. He left the way by that short causeway through Chedzoy, though that was nearer, and much more commodious, probably to avoid the danger of being discovered. For though he might possibly expect at first as much assistance from Chedzoy as the people were able to give him, particular notice was taken, that not one person went thence first to last into his army. Avoiding them therefore, who knew generally nothing of his march, he went by Bradney-lane; which lane he also soon left; so by Marsh-lane, which was further about, and less commodious, he led the army, much encumbered and retarded by the narrowness of the lanes, into the North-moor.”

men for a garrison, fired a pistol, which gave the alarm to Dunbarton's regiment, who put themselves into as good order as they could, to receive their enemies.<sup>1</sup> About one in the morning, Monmouth's troops, having got over the ditch with some difficulty, fell furiously on the king's forces, took two pieces of cannon, and turned them on Dunbarton's and other troops, which threw the latter into disorder.<sup>2</sup> Whilst this was going on, the alarm reached Weston, where the earl of Feversham, the commander in chief of the king's army, was safe in bed; but on receiving this

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fox (History of James II.) says, that colonel Wade, when he came within forty paces of the ditch, was obliged to halt, to put his battalion into that order, which the extreme rapidity of the march had for the time disconcerted. His plan was to pass the ditch, reserving his fire; but while he was arranging his men for that purpose, another battalion newly come up began to fire, though at a considerable distance; a bad example, which it was impossible to prevent the vanguard from following.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. A. Paschall mentions the Taunton men as the best troops in Monmouth's army:—"It was not above half a quarter of an hour," says he, "before the duke's foot, continuing their march, appear to the Scots" (meaning the royals, now the first regiment of foot,) "first in three bodies; then the third lesser body joins with one of the other two. Of these, there were two thousand of their prime, and principally TAUNTON men, led by Wade. By these the fight was managed. The king's soldiers gave them the commendation of stout men. Two thousand more, among whom were one thousand scythe-men, stood at a distance, between Langmoor-stones and them. These two thousand came not to the fight. Many are said to have been behind them, who being hindered by the lanes, through which they marched, could not come up, before they met cause to run with their fellows. The fight continued not much above half an hour. It is said that victory seemed to be inclined to the rebels, and that the king's army was almost in despair."

intelligence, he immediately hastened to the field. The two armies were now hotly engaged. Monmouth's began with a volley of shot and huzzas,<sup>1</sup> and their first fire so confounded their enemies, that those who were nearest Weston ran into the town, and those who were in Weston ran to Middlezoy, and through that place, above a mile from the moor; so that, had the duke's horse, or even the two troops he had sent with captain Hewling to Minehead for cannon, made any opposition to the king's cavalry, the rout had been entire.<sup>2</sup> But the badness of Monmouth's horse, which was commanded by lord Grey, who could not get them into line, most of them being so undisciplined as not to stand the noise of the musquetry and cannon, and these consequently disordering the others, induced his

<sup>1</sup> Monmouth's soldiers, not having patience to wait the guide's motions, ran disorderly, as fast as possible, over the ditch, to come at the royal army, whereby they lost their guide; and a pistol accidentally going off gave notice of their approach to Dunbarton's regiment, the oldest and most experienced soldiers in the king's army, who, being on the advanced post, and in good order, received them with great alertness and resolution. Monmouth's men began the engagement with a volley of bullets, which forced the rear of the king's troops to retire into Weston. The duke, seeing these hopes of success, ordered the lord Grey to bring up his horse; but either through cowardice or treachery, (the latter is suspected,) his lordship left the field, on the advance of two parties of the king's horse, under sir Theophilus Oglethorpe, and sir Francis Compton.—*Collins's Peerage*, 1812, vol. iii. p. 531.

<sup>2</sup> The horse advanced no farther than the ditch; and whether immediately, as according to some accounts, or after having been considerably harassed by the enemy, in their attempts to find a place to pass, according to others, quitted the field.—*Fox's Hist. of James II.* p. 245.

lordship to ride up to the duke, crying, "*All is lost, and it is time for you to shift for yourself.*" At this time, Monmouth was charging at the head of his infantry, with his wonted gallantry; and the steadiness with which they fought, says Oldmixon, was very extraordinary and promising. The waggons with the ammunition were now drawing towards the moor, but meeting with some of lord Grey's horse scampering off, they told the drivers that the duke's army was routed; upon which, the waggons turned about, and the drivers did not stop till they got to Weare and Axbridge, a distance of eighteen miles, where they, or the country-people, plundered them of their lading.

'In the mean time, the king's forces rallied, and Mew, bishop of Winchester, (I speak after Oldmixon,) officiously put his coach-horses to the artillery, that was placed in the road from Weston to Bridgwater, and causing these guns to be drawn against the duke's infantry, the latter were extremely galled by their fire; yet still they stood their ground, calling out, "*Ammunition, ammunition! for the Lord's sake, ammunition!*" which not coming, and Monmouth and Grey being gone with the horse, the foot fled after them, and the king's horse pursuing killed double the number that were slain in the battle.'

'In this battle, a French officer in the king's army was slain, and interred in the church of Middlezoy, where there is the following inscription on a brass plate to his memory:—"Here lyes the body of Lovis Chevalier de Misiers, a French gentleman, who behaved himself with great courage and gallantry eighteen years in the English service; and was unfortunately slain on the 6th of July, 1685, at the battle of Weston, where he behaved himself with all the courage imaginable against the king's enemies, commanded by the rebel duke of Monmouth."

'Oldmixon, who is very particular in his account of this battle, says, that he was upon the spot before the dead were buried, and, young as he then was, observed the slain to be more on the king's part than on the duke's, as they were pointed out to the person who carried him to the moor, by one of the king's soldiers.'

About three hundred of the duke's men, and four hundred of the king's, were killed in the action.'

'The number of Monmouth's men killed is computed by some at two thousand, by others at three hundred; a disparity, however, which may easily be reconciled, by supposing that the one account takes in those only who were killed in battle, while the other comprehends the wretched fugitives who were massacred in ditches, corn-fields, and other hiding places, the following day.

Sixteen of the king's soldiers who were killed, as appears from a memorandum made at the time in the parish register, were buried in Weston, five in the church, and eleven in the church-yard. Above one hundred were wounded. The prisoners were all confined in Weston church, where five of them died of their wounds. About five hundred others were taken prisoners in the pursuit, and upwards of five hundred were apprehended afterwards by the civil power.

Immediately after the battle, the earl of Feversham ordered twenty-two of the prisoners to be hanged on the spot, four of whom, to use the words of the register above-mentioned, were "hanged in *gemmaces*," that is, in chains. The fate of one man in particular is too extraordinary to be passed over. This person, who was remarkably swift of foot, was prevailed upon, on condition of being pardoned, to entertain the general with a specimen of his agility. Accordingly, having stripped himself, a halter was put round his neck, and the opposite end fastened to the neck of a horse. They started at a place called Bussex-rhine, and ran from thence to Brintsfield-bridge, a distance somewhat more than half a mile; and though the horse went at full speed, the man kept pace with him the whole way. But notwithstanding this exertion, and the terms of the agreement, the inhuman Feversham ordered him to be hanged with the rest.—*Locke's Western Rebellion*, p. 22.

Many adherents of the duke's were taken prisoners ; the principal of whom were colonel Holmes, major Perrot, captain Madders of Crewkerne, Mr. Williams, a domestic of the duke's, who had his grace's cloak and two hundred guineas, and captain Adlam, who had about one hundred broad-pieces quilted in his buff-coat. The last was mortally wounded ; but the earl of Feversham would not trust to that, but commanded him to be executed the next day ; and he was the first who was hung in chains on the moor between Weston and Bridgwater, where there was soon, to a considerable length,<sup>1</sup> a range of gibbets and dead bodies.

After the field was cleared of the duke's men, his lordship marched, with five hundred foot, and a party of horse and dragoons, to Bridgwater, where he found, that the duke's forces left there were fled and dispersed. Leaving colonel Kirke in the town with these forces, he sent out divers parties in pursuit of lord Grey and the duke of Monmouth, the latter of whom had made off on the gallop, accompanied by about thirty horse, and by five o'clock in the morning was more than twenty miles from Sedgemoor. Dr.

<sup>1</sup> As soon as the earl of Feversham had gained the victory, he hung twenty of the prisoners, without trial. "His uncle, the famous marshal Turenne," says Granger, "who knew and practised every part of generalship, never treated his prisoners in this manner."—*Biographical History*, vol. iv. p. 271.

Feversham was proceeding in his executions, when the bishop of Bath and Wells (Dr. Ken) warned him, that these unhappy men were now by law entitled to a trial, and that their execution would be deemed a real murder. This remonstrance, however, did not stop the savage nature of colonel Kirke.—*Hume's England*, vol. viii. p. 231.

Oliver, one of the company, who was afterwards physician to Greenwich hospital, rode up to the duke, and said, "Sir, this is the farthest you can go, without throwing yourself into the hands of your enemies, who are waiting for you all over the country eastward. Nobody has yet heard of our ill success in these parts: let us turn off to the sea-coast, over against Wales, seize one of the passage-boats at Uphill, and get over to the other side, where I know you have friends, among whom you will be safe till you can retire elsewhere." The duke inclined to hearken to him, but lord Grey, who appears to have been his evil genius, checked Oliver for offering to give such "foolish advice," as he called it; and the duke going away with Grey, the doctor said, with tears in his eyes, "God bless you, sir, I shall never see you more." So, setting spurs to his horse, he rode off to Bristol.

The small party having now separated, Monmouth, Grey, and a gentleman of Brandenburg, went southward, with a view to gain the New-forest, in Hampshire, where, by means of Grey's connexions in that district, and thorough knowledge of the country, it was hoped they might be in safety, till a vessel could be procured, to transport them to the continent.'

There is a tradition that Monmouth, on riding off with lord Grey, from the field of battle, endeavoured to conceal himself in a cottage, called *Edge-house*, in the village of Grenton, which lies under Polden-hill, and about two or three miles from Sedgemoor, where he was hospitably entertained by the poor shepherd who inhabited it. In the Gentleman's Magazine for

<sup>1</sup> Fox's History of James II. p. 250.



July, 1772, p. 304, there is a short account of this cottage, accompanied by two views of it, termed the front and back front. There is at least some plausibility, if not truth, attached to this tradition. The battle, it will be recollected, commenced about half past one in the morning, and the conflict had not continued more than half an hour, before lord Grey told Monmouth, that it was time to seek their safety by flight; and Oldmixon says, that by five in the morning, Monmouth was twenty miles from Sedgemoor. It is therefore probable that the duke, in his flight from the field of battle, might stop for a few minutes at this cottage, to take some refreshment or to change his dress; more especially as it was situated in his route, and as it is notorious that it stood in a neighbourhood where all ranks were well affected, not only to him personally, but also to the cause in which he was engaged. It may also be urged in favour of this tradition, and of the character of the poor shepherd who lived at Edge-house, that hospitality, as well as fidelity, is not exclusively extended by the higher classes of society to persons suffering under a reverse of fortune, as the adventures of Charles Edward Stuart, in the Highlands of Scotland, will amply testify. It is, however, to be lamented, that we have no better account, than what tradition affords, of an incident so interesting in this crisis of the fate of Monmouth.

#### DUKE OF MONMOUTH AND LORD GREY

##### TAKEN PRISONERS.

The following account of the taking of the duke of Monmouth and lord Grey is copied from a pamphlet printed at the time by the king's authority.\*

\* The title of this pamphlet is, "An Account of the Manner of

“ Immediately after the defeat of the rebels at Bridgwater, on Monday the 6th of July instant, the late duke of Monmouth, late lord Grey, and the Brandenburg fled; and, coming between Gillingham and Shaftesbury, got a guide to lead them the way to the New-forest, most free from towns and watches. He led them by White-sheet, four miles east of Shaftesbury, and thence by Cranbourne-chace; where their horses being tired, they let them loose, and hid their bridles and saddles.

“ In the mean time, the news of the defeat coming to the lord Lumley, then posted at Ringwood, in Hampshire, with three troops of horse of colonel Stapley's regiment, commanded by major Bridger, captain Monk, and captain Peckham; and four companies of foot of colonel Alford's regiment, commanded by lieutenant-colonel Cooper, captain Bickeley, captain Best, and captain Carre, all of the Sussex militia; his lordship was pleased to send his scouts every way to take up suspected persons; and sir William Portman, for the same end, had taken care for strong watches to be set, made up of his yellow coats and others, on the roads from Poole, to the most northern parts of Dorset.

“ Upon the seventh instant, about five in the morning, some of the lord Lumley's said scouts, riding in the road near Holt-lodge, in Dorset, four miles west taking the late Duke of Monmouth, &c. By his Majesty's Command. London, printed by B. G. for Samuel Keeble, at the Turk's Head, over against Fetter-Lane, in Fleet-Street, 1685.” Folio, containing four pages.

It is reprinted in the Harleian Miscellany, vol. ix. p. 123. London, 1810, 8vo.

of Ringwood, just at the turn of a cross-way, surprised and seized two suspected persons; which, when the lord Lumley came up, proved to be the late lord Grey, and the said guide. This put the lord Lumley upon a strict examining of the cottages, with which that heathy country abounds, and calling in the neighbourhood, that were acquainted with the country, &c. Notice of this being brought to sir William Portman, by some of his watches, &c. he hastened to the place, with as many horse and foot as he could of a sudden get together.

“It happened, upon the lord Lumley’s enquiry amongst the cottages, that a poor woman, one Amy Farrant, directed his lordship to a hedge where she had seen two men go over; which hedge proved to be part of the out-bounds of very many inclosed grounds, some overgrown by fern and brakes, and others sown with rye, pease, or oats, &c.

“Whereupon a strict guard was put very near one another, round those out-bounds, whilst other foot and horse did beat within. These guards kept their several posts so well, that, though the late duke and the Brandenburg attempted, at least thirty times, to make their escape out, yet they always found each guard ready; and upon their last attempt to escape, two of the troopers, firing on them, made them immediately to retire, and hide themselves apart from each other, in some of the adjacent ditches, where they were afterwards found.

“Upon the eighth day, by five of the clock in the morning, the Brandenburg was found; who, upon examination, confessed, that he parted with the said

late duke, within the same out-bounds, about one of the clock that morning ; whereupon, every individual person, being encouraged thereby, and by the hopes of having a share in the five thousand pounds, (as was before agreed on in the field,) did renew the pursuit of him with the strictest search and diligence imaginable ; and about seven of the clock of the same morning, one Henry Parkin, servant to Samuel Rolles, esq. happened to discover the said late duke hid in a ditch, covered with fern and brakes ; and, calling to two of the Sussex troopers, that were by him, all three seized him together Sir William Portman, happening to be near that place, rid presently in, and quieted those that cried, *Shoot him, shoot him!* He laid hands on him as his prisoner, and so preserved him from all violence and rudeness ; and immediately, in the same instant, the lord Lumley came in, and agreed, that sir William Portman should search him ; which was done, and as soon as they had found his *George*, they despatched that, with the news, to his majesty, by captain Bickeley and Mr. Chaldecot, Sussex and Dorset gentlemen.

“ The prisoners, after this, were kept two nights at Ringwood. On Friday, the lord Lumley discharged the foot there ; and with the said three troops of the Sussex horse, and one troop of the Dorset militia, commanded by captain Fownes, they were conveyed to Winchester, where joined them two troops of his majesty's in pay, and two of the Northampton militia troops ; all which conducted them to Farnham castle, upon Saturday the 11th, and the next day to Guilford, and upon Monday the 13th, to Vauxhall, where a regiment of the lord Dartmouth's received them, with

other troops of his majesty's in pay ; and thence, by barge, they were carried to Whitehall.

" The papers and books, that were found on him, are since delivered to his majesty.

" One of the books was a manuscript of spells, charms, and conjurations, songs, receipts, and prayers, all written with the said late duke's own hand.

" Two others were manuscripts of fortification, and the military art.

" And a fourth book, fairly written, wherein are computes of the yearly expense of his majesty's navy and land forces.

" And, as for his gold, only twenty guineas were given to the said Parkin, and ten guineas a-piece to the two troopers that first seized him ; and the rest was returned to the said late duke.

" As the prisoners passed through Rumsey, Winchester, Farnham, and Guilford, one would admire to see the very great numbers of the militia, with the deputy-lieutenants, and gentlemen of those parts, that were ready to guard them, and take off the fatigue of such as were on the march.

" Within doors, none but commission officers were trusted to watch by them ; and, besides those, the lord Lumley and sir William Portman took their turns to watch in person, night and day, from the time of the taking of the said late duke, until they had delivered him safe at Whitehall, from whence he was conveyed to the Tower."

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Under these circumstances it is no wonder that his body was quite sunk with fatigue, and that his mind was in a state of despondency. His stock of provision,

which consisted of some pease gathered in the fields through which he had fled, was nearly exhausted, and there is reason to think, that he had little, if any other sustenance, since he left Bridgwater, on the evening of the 5th. To repose he had been equally a stranger. Yet that, under these privations, he appeared dispirited and crest-fallen, is, by the unrelenting malignity of party writers, imputed to him as cowardice and meanness of spirit. That the failure of his enterprise, together with the bitter reflexion, that he had suffered himself to be engaged in it against his own better judgment, joined to the other calamitous circumstances of his situation, had reduced him to a state bordering on despair, it is evident ; and in this frame of mind, he wrote, on the very day of his capture, the following letter<sup>a</sup> to the king :—

*“ Ringwood, July 8th, 1685.*

“ SIR,

“ Your majesty may think it the misfortune I now lie under makes me make this application to you ; but I do assure your majesty, it is the remorse I now have in me of the wrong I have done you in several things ; and now in taking up arms against you. For my taking up arms, it never was in my thoughts, since the king died : the prince and princess of Orange will be witness for me of the assurance I gave them, that I would never stir against you. But my misfortune was such, as to meet with some horrid people, that

<sup>a</sup> This letter is here printed from a copy given in the History of the Reign of William III. vol. i. p. 166, 167—and collated with another copy, printed in lord Somers's Tracts, vol. i. p. 216, which is therein said to be taken from sir Thomas Webster's Collection—and with a third, printed in Fox's History of King James II. p. 251.

made me believe things of your majesty, and gave me so many false arguments, that I was fully led away to believe, that it was a shame and a sin, before GOD, not to do it. But, sir, I will not trouble your majesty, at present, with many things I could say for myself, that I am sure would move your compassion ; the chief of this letter being only to beg of you, that I may have that happiness as to speak to your majesty, for I have that to say to you, sir, that I hope may give you a long and happy reign.

“ I am sure, sir, when you hear me, you will be convinced of the zeal I have for your preservation, and how heartily I repent of what I have done. I can say no more to your majesty now, being this letter must be seen by those that keep me. Therefore, sir, I shall make an end, in begging of your majesty to believe so well of me, that I would rather die a thousand deaths, than excuse any thing I have done, if I did not really think myself the most in the wrong that ever any man was ; and had not, from the bottom of my heart, an abhorrence for those, that put me upon it, and for the action itself. I hope, sir, GOD ALMIGHTY will strike your heart with mercy and compassion for me, as he has done mine with the abhorrence of what I have done. Therefore, I hope, sir, I may live to shew you how zealous I shall ever be for your service ; and could I say but one word in this letter, you would be convinced of it ; but it is of that consequence, that I dare not do it. Therefore, sir, I do beg of you once more to let me speak to you ; for then you will be convinced, how much I shall ever be,

Your majesty's most humble and dutiful

MONMOUTH.”

The only certain conclusion to be drawn from this letter is, that Monmouth still wished anxiously for life, and was willing to save it, even at the cruel price of begging and receiving it as a boon from his enemy. The queen dowager, who seems to have behaved with an uniformity of kindness towards her husband's son, that does her great honour, urgently pressed the king to admit his nephew to an audience. Importuned therefore by entreaties, and instigated by the curiosity which Monmouth's mysterious expressions had excited, he consented, though with a fixed determination to shew no mercy. James's nature did not revolt, his blood did not run cold, at the thoughts of beholding the son of a brother, whom he had loved, embracing his knees, petitioning, and petitioning in vain, for life; of interchanging words and looks with a nephew on whom he was inexorably determined, within forty-eight short hours, to inflict an ignominious death.

Pursuant to this hard-hearted arrangement, Monmouth and Grey, on the very day of their arrival, were brought to Whitehall, where each of them had an interview with his majesty. James, in a letter to the prince of Orange, dated the following day, gives a short account of both these interviews. Monmouth, he says, betrayed a weakness, which did not become one who had claimed the title of king; but made no discovery of consequence. Grey was more ingenuous,<sup>1</sup> (but it is not certain in what sense his majesty uses the term, since he does not refer to any discovery made by that lord,) and never once begged his life. Short

<sup>1</sup> Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 134.—Fox's *History of James II.* p. 259.



as this account is, it seems the only authentic one of those interviews.

Bishop Kennet relates,<sup>1</sup> that “this unhappy captive, by the intercession of the queen dowager, was brought to the king’s presence, and fell presently at his feet, and confessed he deserved to die; but conjured him, with tears in his eyes, not to use him with the severity of justice, and to grant him a life, which he would be ever ready to sacrifice for his service. He mentioned to him the example of several great princes, who had yielded to the impressions of clemency on the like occasions, and who had never afterwards repented of those acts of generosity and mercy; concluding in a most pathetic manner, ‘Remember, sir, I am your brother’s son, and if you take my life, it is your own blood that you shed’. The king asked him several questions, and made him sign a declaration, that his father told him he was never married to his mother; and then said, he was indeed sorry for his misfortunes, but his crime was of too great a consequence to be left unpunished, and he must of necessity suffer for it.” James’s queen is said to have insulted him in a very arrogant and unmerciful manner, so that, when the duke saw there was nothing designed by this interview, but to satisfy

<sup>1</sup> Kennet’s History of England, vol. iii. p. 432.—Echard’s History of England, vol. iii. p. 771.—Fox’s History of James II. p. 260.

\* It was thought to be very mysterious and indecent, in king James, to admit the duke into his presence, when he was not disposed to pardon him; and it was censured and condemned as the breach of a general rule, inviolably observed by kings, “never to allow a criminal, under sentence of death, the sight of his prince’s face, without a design to pardon him.”—*Welwood’s Memoirs*, p. 166.

the queen's revenge, he rose up from his majesty's feet, with a new air of bravery, and was carried back to the Tower."

From Whitehall, Monmouth was, at night, carried to the Tower, where, no longer uncertain as to his fate, he seems to have collected his mind, and to have resumed his wonted fortitude. The bill of attainder, that had lately passed, having superseded the necessity of a trial, his execution was fixed for the next day but one after his commitment. This interval appeared too short, even for the worldly business, which he wished to transact, and he wrote again to the king, on the 14th, desiring some short respite, which was peremptorily refused.

Monmouth was very sincere in his religious professions, and it is probable, that a great portion of this sad day was passed in devotion and religious discourse with the two prelates, who had been sent by his majesty, to assist him in his spiritual concerns. Turner, bishop of Ely, had been with him early in the morning, and Ken, bishop of Bath and Wells, was sent, upon the refusal of a respite, to prepare him for the stroke, which, it was now irrevocably fixed, he should suffer the ensuing day. They stayed with him all night, and, in the morning of the fifteenth, were joined by Dr. Hooper, afterwards, in the reign of Anne, made bishop of Bath and Wells, and by Dr. Tennison, who succeeded Tillotson, in the see of Canterbury. This last divine is said to have been most acceptable to the duke; and though he joined the others in some harsh expostulations, he appears to have done his duty in a softer and less peremptory manner. Certain it is, that none

of these holy men seem to have erred on the side of compassion or complaisance to their illustrious penitent. Besides endeavouring to convince him of the guilt of his connexion with his beloved lady Harriet, of which he could never be brought to a due sense, they seem to have repeatedly teased him with controversy, and to have been far more solicitous to make him profess what they deemed the true creed of the church of England, than to soften or console his sorrows, or to help him to that composure of mind, so necessary for his situation. He declared himself to be a member of their church; but they denied that he could be so, unless he thoroughly believed the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. He repented generally of his sins, and especially of his late enterprise; but they insisted that he must repent of it in the way they prescribed to him, that he must own it to have been a wicked resistance to his lawful king, and a detestable act of rebellion.

#### EXECUTION OF MONMOUTH.

At ten o'clock, on Wednesday the fifteenth, Monmouth proceeded, in a carriage belonging to the lieutenant of the Tower, to Tower-hill, the place destined for his execution. When arrived at the bar, which had been put up for the purpose of keeping out the multitude, Monmouth descended from the carriage, and mounted the scaffold, with a firm step, attended by his spiritual assistants. The sheriffs and executioners were already there. The concourse of spectators was innumerable, and, if we are to credit traditional accounts, never was the general compassion more affectingly expressed. The tears, sighs, and groans,

which the first sight of this heart-rending spectacle produced, were soon succeeded by an universal and awful silence, a respectful attention, and affectionate anxiety to hear every syllable that should pass the lips of the sufferer.<sup>1</sup>

The following particulars, relating to this affecting scene, are taken from a very scarce pamphlet, printed at the time by authority,<sup>2</sup> and are here given *verbatim*.

“The late duke of Monmouth came from the Tower to the scaffold, attended by the bishop of Ely, the bishop of Bath and Wells, Dr. Tennison, and Dr. Hooper, which four the king was graciously pleased to send him, as his assistants, to prepare him for death; and the late duke himself intreated all four of them, to accompany him to the place of execution, and to continue with him to the last. The two bishops, going in the lieutenant’s coach with him to the bars, made seasonable and devout applications to him all the way; and one of them desired him not to be surprised, if they to the very last, upon the scaffold, renewed those exhortations to a *particular repentance*, which they had so often repeated.

“At his first coming upon the scaffold, he looked for the executioner, and, seeing him, said, “Is this the man to do the business? Do your work well.”

“Then the late duke of Monmouth began to speak,

<sup>1</sup> It was said that a brave old officer, who came over with him, and afterwards accompanied the prince of Orange, offered, with a small party of horse, to venture through the guards, and take the duke off the scaffold; but they could not be got together.—*Western Martyrology*, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in Lord Somers’s Collection of Tracts, vol. i. p. 216.

some one or other of the assistants, during the whole time, applying themselves to him.

**MONMOUTH.** I shall say but very little: I come to die: I die a protestant of the church of England.

**ASSISTANTS.** My lord, if you be of the church of England, you must acknowledge the doctrine of *Non-resistance* to be true.

**M.** If I acknowledge the doctrine of the church of England in general, that includes all.

**A.** Sir, it is fit to own that doctrine particularly, with respect to your case.

Here he was much urged about that doctrine of *Non-resistance*, but he repeated in effect his first answer.

Then he began, as if he was about to make a premeditated speech, in this manner.

**M.** I have had a scandal raised upon me about a woman, a lady of virtue and honour. I will name her, *the lady Harriet Wentworth*. I declare, that she is a very virtuous and godly woman. I have committed no sin with her; and that which hath passed betwixt us was very honest and innocent in the sight of GOD.

**A.** In your opinion, perhaps, sir, as you have been often told—(i. e. in the Tower,) but this is not fit discourse in this place.

**Mr. Sheriff Gostlin.**—Sir, were you ever married to her.

**M.** This is not a time to answer that question.

**Mr. Sheriff Gostlin.** Sir, I hoped to have heard of your repentance for the treason and bloodshed, which have been committed.

**M.** I die very penitent.

**A.** My lord, it is fit to be *particular*; and, con-

sidering the *public* evil you have done, you ought to do as much good now, as possibly you can, by a public acknowledgment.

*M.* What I have thought fit to say of *public* affairs, is in a paper which I have signed—I refer to my paper.

*A.* My lord, there is nothing in that paper about *resistance*; and you ought to be *particular* in your repentance, and to have it well grounded. GOD give you *true* repentance.

*M.* I die very penitent, and die with great cheerfulness, for I know I shall go to GOD.

*A.* My lord, you must go to GOD in his own way. Sir, be sure you be truly penitent, and ask forgiveness of GOD for the many you have wronged.

*M.* I am sorry for every one I have wronged: I forgive every body: I have had many enemies: I forgive them all.

*A.* Sir, your acknowledgment ought to be *public* and *particular*.

*M.* I am to die: pray, my lord—I refer to my paper.

*A.* They are but a few words that we desire: we only desire an answer to this point.

*M.* I can bless GOD, that he hath given me so much grace, that for these two years last past, I have led a life unlike to my former course, and in which I have been happy.

*A.* Sir, was there no ill in these two years? In these years, these great evils have happened; and the giving *public* satisfaction is a necessary part of repentance:—be pleased to own a detestation of your REBELLION.

**M.** I beg your lordship, that you will stick to my paper.

**A.** My lord, as I said before, there is nothing in your paper about the doctrine of *Non-resistance*.

**M.** I repent of all things that a true christian ought to repent of. I am to die. Pray my lord—

**A.** Then, my lord, we can only recommend you to the mercy of GOD; but we cannot pray with that cheerfulness and encouragement, as we should, if you had made a *particular* acknowledgment.

**M.** GOD be praised, I have encouragement enough in myself: I die with a clear conscience: I have wronged no man.

**A.** How, sir, no man! Have you not been guilty of *invasion*, and of much *blood*, which has been shed; and it may be, the loss of *many souls*, who followed you? You must needs have wronged a great many.

**M.** I do, sir, own *that*, and am sorry for it.

**A.** Give it the *true* name, sir, and call it *rebellion*.

**M.** What name you please sir. I am sorry for *invading* the kingdom; for the blood that has been shed; and for the souls which may have been lost by my means. I am sorry it ever happened. [*This he spoke softly.*]

**Mr. Sheriff Vandeput** [*to some that stood at a distance.*] He says, he is very sorry for invading the kingdom.

**A.** We have nothing to add, but to renew the frequent exhortations we have made to you, to give some satisfaction for the *public* injuries to the kingdom. There have been a great many lives lost by this *resistance* of your **LAWFUL PRINCE**.

**M.** What I have done has been very ill; and I wish with all my heart it had never been. I never was a man that delighted in blood: I was very far from it: I was cautious in that as any man was. The **ALMIGHTY** knows how I now die, with all the joyfulness in the world.

**A.** GOD grant you may, sir! GOD give you *true repentance*!

**M.** If I had not *true* repentance, I should not so easily have been without the fear of dying. I shall die like a lamb.

**A.** Much may come from natural courage.

**M.** I do not attribute it to my own nature, for I am fearful as other men are; but I have now no fear, as you may see by my face; but there is something within me which does it, for I am sure I shall go to GOD.

**A.** My lord, be sure upon good grounds. Do you repent you of all your sins, *known or unknown, confessed or not confessed*; of all the sins which might proceed from *error in judgment*?

**M.** In general for all, I do with all my soul.

**A.** GOD **ALMIGHTY** of his infinite mercy forgive you! Here are great numbers of spectators: here are the *sheriffs*; they represent the *great city*; and in speaking to them, you speak to the whole city. Make some satisfaction by owning your *crime* before them. [*He was silent here.*]

Then all went to solemn commendatory prayers, which continued for a good space; the late duke of Monmouth and the company kneeling, and joining in them with great fervency.

Prayers being ended, before he, and the four who assisted him, were risen from their knees, he was again earnestly exhorted to a *true and thorough* repentance.



After they were risen up, he was exhorted to pray for the king; and was asked, whether he did not desire to send some dutiful message to *his* MAJESTY, and to recommend *his wife and children* to his majesty's favour.

*M.* What harm have *they* done? Do it, if you please. I pray for *him*, and for all men.

[*Then the versicles were repeated.*]

*A.* O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us!

*M.* [He made the response.] And grant us thy salvation!

*A.* [It followed.] O Lord, save the king!

*M.* And mercifully hear us, when we call upon thee!

*A.* Sir, do you not pray for the KING with us?

[The versicle was again repeated.] O Lord, save the king!

*M.* [After some pause, he answered,] *Amen!*

Then he spoke to the executioner, concerning his undressing, &c. and he would have no cap, &c. and at the beginning of his undressing, it was said to him on this manner:

*A.* My lord, you have been bred a soldier: you will do a generous, christian thing, if you please to go to the rail, and speak to the soldiers; and say, that here you stand, a sad example of rebellion, and entreat them and the people to be loyal and obedient to the king.

*M.* I have said I will make *no speeches*: I *will* make no speeches: *I come to die.*

*A.* My lord, ten words will be enough.

*M.* Then calling his servant, and giving him something like a toothpick-case, Here, (said he,) give this to the person to whom you are to deliver the other things.

*M.* (*To the executioner.*) Here are six guineas for you : pray do your business well : do not serve me as you did my lord Russel. I have heard you struck him threes or four times. Here, (to his servant,) take these remaining guineas, and give them to him, *if he does his work well.*

*Executioner.* I hope I shall.

*M.* If you strike me twice, I cannot promise you not to stir.

During his undressing, and standing towards the block, there were used by those who assisted him divers ejaculations proper at that time, and much of the 51st Psalm was repeated, and particularly, " Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God," &c.

Then he lay down, and soon after he raised himself upon his elbow, and said to the executioner, " Prithee, let me feel the axe : " (he felt the edge, and said,) " I fear it is not sharp enough."

*Executioner.* It is sharp enough, and heavy enough.

*Then he lay down again.*

During this space, many pious ejaculations were used by those that assisted him, with great fervency, *ex. gr.* GOD accept your repentance ! GOD accept your repentance ! GOD accept your IMPERFECT repentance ! My lord, GOD accept your GENERAL repentance ! GOD ALMIGHTY shew his OMNIPOTENT mercy upon you ! FATHER, into thy hands we commend his spirit, &c. LORD JESUS, receive his soul !

Then the executioner proceeded to do his office.\*

\* " But under such distraction of mind, that he fell into the very error, which the duke had so earnestly cautioned him to avoid ; wounding him at first so slightly, that he lifted up his head, and looked him in the face, as if to upbraid him, for making his death painful ; but said nothing. He then prostrated himself again, and

This is a true account. Witness our hands,  
 Francis, Ely. Thomas Tennison.  
 Thomas, Bath and Wells. George Hooper.  
 William Gostlin, } Sheriffs.  
 Peter Vandeput, }

A copy of the paper, to which the late duke of Monmouth referred himself in the discourses held upon the scaffold.

"I declare, that the title of king was forced upon me; and that it was very much contrary to my opinion, when I was proclaimed. For the satisfaction of the world, I do declare, that the late king told me, he was never married to my mother. Having declared this, I hope that the king, who is now, will not let my children suffer on this account. And to this I put my hand this fifteenth day of July, 1685.

"MONMOUTH."

"Declared by himself, and signed in the presence of us,

"Francis, Ely. Thomas Tennison.  
 "Thomas, Bath and Wells. George Hooper."

received two other ineffectual blows; upon which the executioner threw down his axe, in a fit of horror, crying out, *he could not finish his work*; but on being brought to himself by the threats of the sheriffs, took up the fatal weapon again, and at two other strokes, made a shift to separate the head from the body."—*Review of the Reigns of Charles and James*, p. 885.

<sup>1</sup> As this sheet was going to press, the Rev. H. Bower, vicar of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, favoured the editor with the original scarce pamphlet, printed in folio, in four pages. The title is, "An Account of what passed at the Execution of the late Duke of Monmouth, on Wednesday the 15th of July, 1685, on Tower-Hill. Together with a paper signed by himself that Morning in the Tower,

**JUDGE JEFFREYS'S BLOODY ASSIZES.**

The head being taken off, the accomplices were pursued with severity. For, whereas "wise and good princes," it has been well observed, "content themselves, on such occasions, with punishing the ringleaders, and some few adherents, now, by a barbarity not to be paralleled in the reigns of Nero, Caligula, or the most celebrated tyrants, not only those who had been actually with the duke of Monmouth, but even those who had any way assisted, or so much as harboured them, whether they could help it or not, were equally involved in the crime of his insurrection."<sup>1</sup>

The lord chief justice Jeffreys, with four other judges, and a body of troops commanded by colonel Kirke, was sent into the west, with a special commission, to try all, who had, in any degree, countenanced or aided the duke of Monmouth and his followers. He set out, on his cruel mission, the latter end of August; "when he breathed death," as the historian expresses it, "like a destroying angel, and sanguined his very ermines with blood."

He opened his commission at Winchester; where the lady Lisle, for concealing Mr. Hickes, a non-conformist minister, and Mr. Nelthorp, was arraigned for high-treason. In vain did the aged prisoner plead that these persons had been put into no proclamation;

in the Presence of the Lords Bishops of Ely, and Bath and Wells, Dr. Tennison, and Dr. Hooper. And also the Copy of his Letter to his Majesty after he was taken, dated at Ringwood, in Hantsire, the 8th of July. London, Printed for Robert Horne, John Baker, and Benjamin Took, 1685.

<sup>1</sup> History of William III. vol. i. p. 161.

had been convicted by no verdict; and that no man could be denominated a traitor, till the sentence of some legal court was passed upon him: that it appeared not by any proof, that she was so much as acquainted with the guilt of the persons, or had even heard of their joining in the rebellion of Monmouth: that, though she might be obnoxious on account of her family, it was well known, that her heart was ever loyal, and that no person in England had shed more tears for the tragical event, in which her husband had unfortunately borne too large a share: and that the same principles, which she herself had ever embraced, she had carefully instilled into her son, and had at that very time sent him to fight against those very rebels, whom she was now accused of harbouring. Although the jury twice brought her in *not guilty*, the menaces of the judge terrified them into an alteration of their verdict, and the third time they pronounced her *guilty*. Jeffreys sentenced her to be burned; and the only favour that could be obtained was, that she should be beheaded, which was carried into execution on the 2d of September, 1685.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The lady Lisle, or more properly Mrs. Alicia Lisle, was the widow of John Lisle, esq. one of the regicides, who had enjoyed great favour and authority under Cromwell, having been one of his lords, (whence the title of lady which Mrs. Lisle enjoyed,) and president of the high court of justice, and who, having fled after the restoration to Lausanne, in Switzerland, was there assassinated by three Irish ruffians. Jeffreys, who had previously resolved to make a sacrifice of this lady, had obtained of James II. a promise that he would not pardon her; which the king owed to the earl of Feversham, when he, upon the offer of one thousand pounds, if he could obtain her pardon, went and begged it. Jeffreys affirmed to the jury, UPON HIS HONOUR! (*monstrum horrendum!*) that

From Winchester Jeffreys proceeded to Salisbury. The prisoners that had been taken up in different parts of the country, and thrown into that gaol, with those brought from Winchester, were by order removed to Dorchester, at which place the judge arrived on Thursday September the third. After an excellent sermon, on Friday morning, inculcating mercy, at which, as well as in the prayers, the chief justice was seen to laugh, he repaired to the court, which, by his direction, was hung with red cloth. Having delivered a charge, fraught with severe sentiments, and pronounced with passionate vehemence, he adjourned until eight o'clock the next morning, and a bill was found against thirty persons. They put themselves on their trials, notwithstanding his lordship's threatening, "that if any did put themselves on trial, and the country found them guilty, they should have but little

Hickes and Nelthorpe had confessed they had been with the duke of Monmouth. This was to turn witness against her, after which he ought not to have sat as judge in the business; yet he charged the jury, in a most violent manner, to bring her in *guilty*. The audience were greatly affected with such unusual behaviour in a judge; only the person most concerned, the lady herself, who was then upwards of seventy, was so little moved, that she fell asleep. The jury brought her in *not guilty*, but the execrable Jeffreys, in great fury, sent them out again; yet they brought her in, a second time, *not guilty*. Jeffreys now seemed as if in a transport of rage, threatening them with an attain of treason. Thus, overcome with fear, they at the third time brought her in *guilty*. She died expressing great joyfulness that she suffered for an act of charity and piety. Her remains were deposited in Ellingham church-yard, near Ringwood, in Hants.—*Hume's History of England*, vol. viii. p. 234.—*Oldmixon's Hist. of the Stuarts*, p. 706.—*Topographer*, vol. iv. p. 7.

time to live." At the same time; he insinuated, "that it were better to plead guilty, if they expected any favour." Twenty-nine were found guilty. They were all immediately condemned, and no intercession or influence could procure even a respite of the execution, which, with respect to thirteen, was fixed for the Monday following, when they accordingly suffered at Dorchester. Among these were Mr. George Stewart, of Colyton; Mr. Joseph Speed, of the same place, a person of unblemished reputation; Mr. Smith, of Chardstock, who, having some militia-money in his hands, had been compelled to deliver it to a party of the duke of Monmouth's men; and Mr. Bragg, a gentleman of an ancient family, and an attorney at Chardstock, who had, reluctantly, been constrained, as he was returning home from holding a court, to direct some of the duke's men to the house of a Roman catholic, where they expected to meet with some arms.

This harsh proceeding was intended to shorten the business, and to tempt others to a confession, without which, not a tenth part of them could have been proved guilty. To entrap the ignorant and the unwary, two officers were sent to the gaol, to call over the names of the prisoners, with a promise of mercy, if they confessed, which many did; but this step was so artfully managed, that the officers themselves, if they pleaded *not guilty*, were to ground an evidence against them, on their own confessions. The remainder, except a very few, were thus disposed to plead *guilty*. This manœuvre put an end to the trials.

In this concise way, two hundred and ninety-two were at once sentenced to death, about eighty of whom

were executed. One Mr. Thomas Lawrence, by an application to the judge's favourites, purchased his life; but was obliged to pay down two hundred pounds, and to give a bond for two hundred pounds more; though the only charge that lay against him was, that he had recovered but one horse out of three, which a party of the duke's men had taken out of a barn belonging to an estate in the parish of Lyme, of which he was the steward.

From Dorchester the chief justice went to Exeter; where two hundred and forty-three persons were in custody for assisting the duke of Monmouth. One of them, Mr. Fourakers, pleading *not guilty*, on the jury finding a verdict against him, was immediately sentenced and executed, to terrify the rest, who all pleaded *guilty*. They were all condemned, but not so great a proportion suffered as in Dorsetshire.

Taunton was the next theatre of his rage and cruelty; where he opened his commission with a charge full of sharp invectives. In this town, and at Wells, were more than five hundred prisoners. On the next morning the assizes began; when some put themselves on their trial, and were found guilty, of which number was Mr. Simon Hamlin, a man of exemplary and respectable character. He lived several miles from the town, and, on hearing that the duke of Monmouth was there, went into Taunton, to advise and urge his son, who resided there, not to take a part; and was there again on business on the following market-day: being a dissenter he fell under suspicion. The mayor favoured the prosecution, and, on the evidence of two profligate men, he was



convicted. The mayor attempted, afterwards, to save his life, declaring to the judge, that he had committed him by mistake; to which Jeffreys replied, "You have brought him on: if he be innocent, his blood be upon you." This first cruelty induced the rest to plead *guilty*, in hopes of favour; though the only favour granted was a respite for a few days, which those that pleaded *not guilty* could not obtain.

The same expeditious process, the same severe charges to the gentlemen, the same menaces to juries, were used at Wells, as at other places. In the whole of his circuit two hundred and sixty-one were executed. At Axbridge, six suffered; at Bath, six; at Bridgewater, nine; at Bruton, three; at Chard, twelve; at Castle-cary, three; at Crewkerne, ten; at Chewton-Mendip, two; at Dorchester, thirteen; at Cothelston, two; at Dunster, three; at Dulverton, three; at Frome, twelve; at Glastonbury, six; at Ilchester, twelve; at Ilminster, twelve; at Keynsham, eleven; at Langport, three; at Lyme, twelve; at Minehead, six; at Milborne-Port, two; at Nether-Stowey, three; at Pensford, twelve; at Philip's-Norton, twelve; at Porlock, two; at Redcliff-Hill, Bristol, six; at Shepton-Malet, thirteen; at Somerton, seven; at South-Petherton, three; at Stoke-Courcy, two; at Stogumber, three; at Taunton, nineteen; at Wincanton, six; at Wellington, three; at Wells, eight; at Wiveliscombe, three; at Wrington, three; and at Yeovil, eight. Thus death, in its most terrifying forms, was exhibited in every quarter; and the country overflowed with blood. Every part of it shewed spectacles, at which decency blushed, and humanity shuddered. The rites

of funeral were denied to those who suffered ; the houses and steeples were covered with their heads ; and the trees laden almost as thick with quarters, as with leaves. The eye was every where shocked with the sight of carcasses ; and the bleeding hearts of the relatives were again wounded with the view of a parent's, a son's, or a brother's limbs.

Numbers, condemned to die, were afterwards delivered over to certain gentlemen, for transportation : as, to sir Philip Howard, two hundred ; to sir William Booth, two hundred ; to sir William Stapleton, one hundred ; to sir Christopher Musgrave, one hundred ; to Jerome Nipho, esq. one hundred ; to captain John Price, fifty ; and, besides these, to the queen's order, one hundred. In all, eight hundred and fifty. About six of these were afterwards pardoned, and others were transported in their stead. A considerable number were continued in gaol ; many were fined ; and many of those, who were pardoned or discharged, owed their preservation, not to the equity and mercy, but to the avarice of their judge. For pardons were not granted according to the innocence, but sold according to the wealth of the suitor ; different sums, from ten pounds to fourteen thousand guineas, being the purchase of them.

Of those who escaped execution, or transportation, twenty were condemned, but their names omitted in the warrant for execution ; fifty-two received sentence, but were kept in gaol till further orders ; seventy-five were recommended to his majesty's mercy ; fifty-three obtained pardon, by surrendering within four days after the proclamation ; thirty-five were fined or whipped ;

fifteen discharged, and sixteen kept in custody, for want of evidence ; and one hundred and forty-two were admitted to bail. Thus four hundred and eight, who were restored to their friends and to society, were exposed to the risk of a trial, before a rash and unjust court, and suffered the terrors and distresses of a prosecution. The usage they received in prison was barbarous. The gaolers were compelled to shew them to every little fellow in authority, so that they were daily insulted ; exorbitant charges were made for every thing they had ; their relations were not allowed access to them, even in time of sickness ; and many died, for want of assistance, of a pestilential distemper.

Where it was allowed, that the conduct did not justify a capital sentence, severe whippings were inflicted. Mr. Staple, of Thorncombe, in Devonshire, a man of substance, and much beloved, suffered under a sentence of this kind, to a degree, that called out the pity of many. Mrs. Brown, of Lyme, for saying, in jest, to an officer, " I will pay my excise to king Monmouth," was found guilty of a misdemeanor, and whipped in several market-towns. A poor lad, of Weymouth, about ten or twelve years of age, who had taken down, and read to the people, the duke of Monmouth's declaration, which, in the night, had been fixed up in the town, was tried for it ; and punished in this mode, till the flesh of his back was cut with the lashes, and his life was in great danger.\*

But the most affecting instance of the severity, with which this mode of punishment was appointed, was

\* Western Martyrology, p. 256, and p. 182, 183 ; and Locke's Western Rebellion.

afforded by the case of Mr. Tutchin, a young gentleman of Hampshire, engaged in the duke of Monmouth's interest, and who was committed to prison under the assumed name of Thomas Pitts. Under this name he was tried, and, no person appearing as evidence against him, was acquitted of rebellion. But Jeffreys, before he was discharged from prison, having discovered his true name, resolved to revenge the deception, saying, "he was never so far outwitted by an old or young rogue in his life." He first tried to draw from the young gentleman, by an examination, and by the management of the gaoler, confessions that might convict himself, and information that might impeach some gentlemen in Hampshire. Being defeated herein by the caution and reserve of Mr. Tutchin, he summoned him to the hall again; but not choosing to indict him for rebellion, he passed on him, for changing his name, the following sentence: "That he should remain in prison during the space of seven years; that once every year he should be whipped through all the market towns in Dorsetshire; that he should pay a fine of one hundred marks to the king; and find security for his good behaviour during life."

At this sentence the ladies in the court burst into tears; which Jeffreys observing, turned to them, and said, "Ladies, if you did but know what a villain this is, as well as I do, you would say, that this sentence is not half bad enough for him." The clerk of the arraigns observed to his lordship, "that as there were a great many market towns in the county, the sentence reached to a whipping about once a fortnight; and Mr. Tutchin was a very young man."—"Aye," said Jeffreys, "he is a very young man, but an old rogue; and all the

interest in England sha'n't reverse the sentence I have passed on him." Mr. Tutchin drew up a petition to the king, requesting as a favour that he might be hanged with his fellow prisoners, rather than undergo this severe sentence. The king, as well as the court, was sensible of its barbarous force; but all the answer which could be obtained was, "that Mr. Tutchin must wait with patience." Upon this he endeavoured to purchase a pardon; but Jeffreys would not hear his name mentioned.\* A day or two before the execution of the

\* The Rev. Mark Noble, in his *Continuation of Granger's Biographical History*, (vol. ii. p. 311.) thus speaks of this gentleman:

"John Tutchin, esq. a petulant political writer, promoted the rebellion of Monmouth by his publications. He was every way contemptible; yet considered himself, at the revolution, not only a persecuted patriot, but a genius worthy to celebrate and protect the sacred name of liberty; and, not deterred by former sufferings, the political mania continued upon him in great strength. He had printed in his "*Observator*," for 1703, certain reflections, which were so obnoxious to the ministry, that a proclamation was issued, offering one hundred pounds for apprehending him. Tutchin attempted poetry, as well as prose, and published his "*Poems*," in 1685. He besides affected dramatic writing; and, as a specimen, published "*The Unfortunate Shepherd*;" upon which Granger remarks, that he was not more unfortunate when he was whipped, than when he produced this drama, for his genius did not soar higher than was necessary for a woeful ballad. His "*Foreigners*," published in the reign of William III. produced the "*True-born Englishman*;" and his other writings, in that of queen Anne, contributed to change the ministry. The hangman did justice on some of his paper misdeeds in Dublin; and some persons in England, offended by his scurrility, took so severe a personal vengeance on him, that he died in consequence, November 23, 1707, aged 44."

Pope has immortalized him in the *Dunciad* :—

"Careless on high, stood, unabash'd, De Foo,

And TUTCHIN, flagrant from the scourge, below."

There is a portrait of Mr. Tutchin, engraved by Vander Gucht,

sentence, he was attacked with the small pox, to a severe degree, and lay by himself, in this condition, without any help, but from his fellow-prisoners; because no one was allowed to have any communication with the gaol, where some scores died, every week, of a pestilential disorder. While he was lying in this miserable condition, and his life despaired of, the judge was brought over to reverse his sentence.<sup>1</sup>

It is not possible to conceive the misery and desolation, which these proceedings spread through the country; which, "with the besom of his cruelties," this man, who, as bishop Burnet expresseth it, was perpetually drunk, or in a rage, more like a fury than a judge, swept a way before him, and depopulated, instead of punished. "Young and old were hanged by clusters, as if the chief justice had designed to raise the price of halters; families were extirpated; and, on bare suspicion, a great number were transported beyond sea, and sold for slaves, and the purchase money given away to papists."<sup>2</sup> England never saw such scenes of violence, rage, and cruelty, under the form of law. Lord Stawel, though a tory, was so shocked at the measures of Jeffreys, that he refused to see him. To resent this affront, the judge commanded, that colonel Bovet, a gentleman of Taunton, should be executed at Cothelston, where lord Stawel then resided.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 224—227. After this, Mr. Tutchin visited the chief justice in the tower.

<sup>2</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 164, and Secret History of the Reigns of Charles II. and James II. p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Leake's Western Rebellion, p. 9, note, f.

## SUFFERERS AT TAUNTON.

In a history of Taunton, it may be properly expected, that, besides taking this general view of the proceedings of the chief justice, some particular notice should be paid to the memory of those, who suffered in this town.

*The Hewlings.*

Among these, Mr. Benjamin Hewling was a leading character. He was the son of an eminent Turkey merchant, in London; a young gentleman of good education, of singular attainments in mathematics and natural philosophy, of a graceful person, untainted morals, and unaffected piety. He, and his brother, Mr. William Hewling, engaged, as their own words were, with the duke of Monmouth, "for the English liberties and the protestant religion." They came over with the duke, and the former had the command of a troop of horse; the latter was a lieutenant of foot. Mr. Benjamin Hewling had particularly signalized himself in several skirmishes; and, a little before the battle of Sedgemoor, was sent, with a detachment of his own troop and two more, to fetch cannon from Minehead; but came not up, till the field was lost. As the best of Monmouth's men were in this detachment, the fatal catastrophe of the day was supposed to be much owing to their absence. After the dispersing of the duke's army, Mr. Benjamin Hewling, with his brother, fled, and put to sea; but were driven back, and, at the hazard of their lives, got to shore. Seeing the country filled with soldiers, and every way of defence or escape cut off, they surrendered themselves prisoners to a gentleman, who resided near the place of their landing; and, from thence, were sent to Exeter gaol, on the twelfth of July.

They were kept here some days, and their behaviour secured the respect of those who were inimical to their cause. On the 27th of July, they were put on board the Swan frigate, to be conveyed to London. Their carriage, during the passage, conciliated the kindness of the captain and officers. When they arrived in the river Thames, captain Richardson, the keeper of Newgate, took them into his custody, and conducted them to that prison. Here they were separated, heavy irons put on them, and their friends denied access to them. After great importunity and expense, some of their near relations had permission to speak a few words to them, in the presence of the keeper; to which they replied, "They were contented with the will of God, whatever it should be."

After three weeks' confinement in Newgate, orders were given to bring them down into the west for trial. On being told this, they answered, "They were glad of it." The cheerfulness of their deportment, at their leaving this prison, surprised the spectators; who said, "Surely they had received their pardon, else they could never carry it with that cheerfulness and courage." But the fact was, that, whatever hopes they received from their friends, they had no expectations of this for themselves, from first to last. In their journey to Dorchester, the keepers, who attended them, declared, "that their carriage was so grave, serious, and christian, that it made them admire to see and hear what they did from such young men." And, though their situation, on their journey, from the heavy irons with which they were loaded, and the inhuman treatment they met with, was particularly painful; yet,



they preserved, through it, the same composure, and tranquillity of mind, rising indeed to joy. They professed, "that they were better, and in a more happy condition, than ever in their lives, from the sense of the pardoning love of GOD, in Jesus Christ, to their souls; wholly referring themselves to their wise and gracious GOD, to choose for them life or death;" expressing themselves thus: "Any thing that pleases GOD, what HE sees best, so be it: we know that he is able to deliver, but, if not, blessed be his name: death is not terrible now, but desirable." Mr. Benjamin Hewling particularly added, "As for the world, there is nothing in it to make it worth while to live, except we may be serviceable to GOD therein." And afterwards he said, "Oh! GOD is a strong refuge: I have found him so indeed."

On the 6th of September, he was commanded to be conducted, for trial, to Taunton; and on taking leave of a near relation, who staid at Dorchester, to see the issue of his brother's trial, he said, "Oh! blessed be GOD for afflictions: I have found such happy effects, that I would not have been without them for all this world."

The event of his trial was, his being condemned to die. To the end he continued to express a superiority to the fear of death, a cheerful expectation of it, and a strong sense of spiritual and eternal things; complaining of nothing in his circumstances, but want of a place of retirement, to give full and uninterrupted vent to his devotional feelings. He expressed great pleasure in the review of the penitent sentiments, with which his mind had been impressed, and of the

conviction he had of the blessedness of a reconciliation with GOD, the excellency of holiness, and the pleasures of piety. To these sentiments he was no stranger, during the hurries of a military life ; but he reflected on his confinement in Newgate, as the sweetest period of his existence, because then they were the most lively and powerful.

He spoke of the disappointment, that had attended the cause, in which he had embarked, with much concern and grief ; because of the connection he conceived it had with the glory of GOD, and the freedom of his country ; but, as to the personal prosperity, which might have arisen from it, he declared, “ that it appeared to him of small account, as it could not have been either satisfying or permanent, for death would have put a period to it all.” He added, “ that perhaps he might have been so foolish as to have been captivated with it, to the neglect of eternal concerns ; and, in this view, his present circumstances were incomparably better.”

His conversation was tinged with expressions of great delight in the most holy and virtuous characters, of strong compassion for the special welfare of others, and of earnest solicitude to awaken them to serious views and sentiments ; saying, “ that death and eternity are such weighty concerns, that the way to receive death cheerfully is to prepare for it seriously ; and that, if GOD should please to spare their lives, there was the same reason to be serious, and spend their remaining days in his fear and service.” He took great care to maintain the worship of GOD with his fellow-prisoners.

Three or four days before he, or they, who were condemned with him, were to suffer death, there was a report that no more should die; on which he said, "I don't know what GOD hath doné, beyond our expectations: if he doth prolong my life, I am sure it is all his own, and, by his grace, I will wholly devote it to him." But this report was not well founded; and so far was it from being true, that, when Miss Hannah Hewling, his sister, supplicated the judge's mercy, in behalf of her brother, and offered one hundred pounds for the respite of the execution, for two days only, he refused her even this small favour; and, as she hung on his coach, imploring his attention to her suit, he commanded the coachman to cut her hands and fingers with his whip, to make her let go her hold. And on the 29th of September, about ten or eleven at night, they were told they must die the next morning. This notice was sudden and unexpected; on which Mr. Hewling made this reflection: "Though men design to surprise, GOD doth, and will, perform his word, to be a very present help in trouble."

On the morning of his execution, his cheerfulness and comfort were much increased; and he waited for the sheriff, with the greatest serenity of mind, saying, "Now the will of GOD is determined, to whom I have referred it, and he hath chosen, most certainly, that which is best." Afterwards, with a smiling countenance, he discoursed on the glory of heaven, remarking, with much delight, on the 3d, 4th, and 5th verses of the 22d chapter of Revelations. Then he desired to have the 2d of Corinthians, chap. v. to the 10th verse, read to him. His comforts increased, and he expressed

his pleasurable hopes, and good assurance, of his interest in this glorious inheritance, and of his being about to take possession of it. On this ground he said, "Death was more desirable than life, and that he had rather die than live any longer." As to the manner of his death, he said, "When I have considered others under these circumstances, I have thought it very dreadful; but, now GOD hath called me to it, I bless GOD I have quite other apprehensions of it: I can now cheerfully embrace it as an easy passage to glory. And, though death separates us from the enjoyment of each other here, it will be but a very short time, and then we shall meet in such enjoyments, as now we cannot conceive, and for ever rejoice in each other's happiness." Then, reading the scriptures, and musing with himself, he intimated the great comfort he derived from it, saying, "O what an invaluable treasure is the blessed word of GOD! in all conditions there is a store of strong consolations." One desiring his bible, he said, "No, this shall be my companion to the last moment of my life." He and his fellow-sufferers maintained and displayed the same serene, cheerful, and devout frame of mind to the last moment: the spectators were affected and astonished, saying, "that it both broke and rejoiced their hearts, and made death appear with another aspect." The soldiers, who had insultingly said, "Surely these persons have no thoughts of death, but will find themselves surprised by it;" now changed their tone, declaring, "that they now saw he and they had something extraordinary within, that carried them through with such joy." Others of them said, "that they were so convinced of their happiness, that

they would be glad to exchange conditions with them." A great officer in the king's army was often heard to say, "If you would learn to die, go to the young men of Taunton." And some of the bitterest of their opponents in the town, as they were carried to their graves, declared, "that those persons had left sufficient evidence, that they were now glorified saints in heaven."

Mr. Benjamin Hewling was but twenty-two years of age.<sup>1</sup> His brother, who was younger, was executed about the same time at Lyme, and met death with the like magnanimity and alacrity. The enormous sum of one thousand pounds was exacted of the sister of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, for permission to bury his remains in St. Mary Magdalen's church, and this not without the interest of one of the principal officers in the royal army.<sup>2</sup>

The father of these unfortunate youths was Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a citizen of London, and an eminent Turkey merchant. He married Hannah, the daughter of William Kyffin, a merchant also, who was looked upon in those days to be exceedingly rich, and who was of general esteem, his fortune and influence placing him among the foremost of the dissenters in the city; to some of whom, called Baptists, he occasionally preached. He had another daughter married

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. B. Hewling was of great popularity among his political brethren, the staunch whigs in the city. There are two engraved portraits of him :

1. In small quarto, in an oval, with a laced band, but without his name. *Granger's B. H.* vol. iv. p. 320.

2. In Pitt's New Martyrology, in an oval, with laced band, and a full flowing wig, with this inscription, "The true Effigies of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, *Ætatis suæ*, 22."

<sup>2</sup> Locke's Western Rebellion, p. 2.

to Hayes the banker, who was tried for his life, in 1684, for remitting money to sir Thomas Armstrong, then an outlaw. The trial seems to be curious and important, as it struck at the root of mercantile liberty. It may be seen at large in Burnet's History of his Own Times, vol. i. p. 599, and State Trials, vol. iii. p. 983.

Mr. Hewling dying in 1684, his two sons went to Holland, and returned to England with the duke of Monmouth. Great intercession was made with Jeffreys to save their lives, and that by one of the judge's relations, from whose fortune he had formed great expectations. He, however, refused a pardon, which produced a petition to the throne; and Miss Hannah Hewling, the elder sister, was introduced by lord Churchill, afterwards duke of Marlborough; but her petition being denied, his lordship, when alone with Miss Hewling, made use of this declaration, "That the king's heart was as incapable of feeling compassion as that marble," pointing to the chimney-piece before them.

About a year after, Miss Hewling married major Richard Cromwell, grandson of the protector, by his third son, Henry, who had married Elizabeth, daughter of sir Francis Russell, of Cambridge-shire. The issue of major Cromwell, by Miss Hewling, was, 1. Mary, who died unmarried, 1730; 2. William Cromwell, of Kirby-street, Hatton Garden, who died without issue, 1772; 3. Richard Cromwell, of Bartlett's Buildings, attorney-at-law, who married the daughter of Ebenezer Gatton, esq. by whom he had one son, and three daughters; 4. Thomas Cromwell, grocer, on Snow-hill, who died 1748. He had two wives, by whom he had children: among these, Mr. Thomas Cromwell, who was in the East-India service, and Mr. Oliver Cromwell, of the Million Bank, were the only male descendants of the protector, they being his great-grandsons; 5. Henry Cromwell, who had a place in the Excise Office, and died in 1769; 6. Oliver Cromwell, who had an ensign's commission in the army, and died in 1748.

Richard Cromwell, the father of these six children, was, by the favour and interest of the duke of Ormond, promoted to the rank of major, and died in Spain during queen Anne's wars, whilst under the command of the earl of Galway. Hannah Hewling, his wife, died in 1731.

Mr. Kyffin, the grandfather of the Hewlings, was personally

known to Charles II. and James II. The latter, when in distress, sent for him to court, and told him, in the style of the times, that he intended a favour to the dissenters, and, as a proof of it, he had put him down as an alderman in his new charter. "Alas! sir, (replied Kyffin,) I am a very old man: I have withdrawn myself from all kind of business for some years past, and am incapable of doing any service in such an affair to your majesty or the city. Besides, sir," the old man went on, fixing his eyes steadfastly on the king, whilst the tears ran plentifully down his wrinkled cheeks, "the death of my grandsons gave a wound to my heart, which is still bleeding, and will never close but in the grave."

The king was deeply struck by the manner, freedom, and spirit of this unexpected rebuke. A total silence ensued, while the galled conscience of James seemed to shrink from the horrid remembrance. In a minute or two, however, he recovered himself enough to say, "Mr. Kyffin, I shall find a balsam for that sore."

#### *Major Perrott.*

This gentleman was the first executed at Taunton, on the 30th of September, 1685. He was a brewer of London, and had been very zealous for the duke, by whom he had been made a major. He made a long speech at the place of execution, and met death, as a man almost unconcerned at it. He addressed the spectators more like a minister in the pulpit, than a prisoner going to be executed.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Captain Annesley.*

Another, who suffered at the same time, was Mr. Abraham Annesley, who was first made a lieutenant, and afterwards a captain of foot. He fought very courageously, and, though he was engaged in every action, and was in the hottest part of the battle of Sedgemoor, he escaped unhurt. In his speech at the place of execution, he declared, that, "as a true Englishman,

<sup>1</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 188.

he thought it his duty to venture his life in defence of the protestant religion, against popery and arbitrary power. For that purpose he joined the duke of Monmouth's army, and had he a thousand lives, they should all have been engaged in the same cause. He might have been pardoned," he said, "if he would have impeached others; but he abhorred such ways of deliverance, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of GOD, than to enjoy life with sin."

*Mr. William Jenkin.*

A third fellow-sufferer, on the same day, was Mr. William Jenkin, a young gentleman of sober, virtuous manners, great vivacity, and ready wit. He had a happy genius for mechanics, and was a good classical scholar. His father was a non-conformist minister, in London; who, for his opinions, had been cast into Newgate, where confinement and want of usual exercise soon killed him; which led this his only son to give rings at his funeral, with this motto, "William Jenkin,<sup>1</sup> murdered in Newgate." The death of his father impressed his mind with a strong sense of the iniquitous measures of government, and disposed him to embark

<sup>1</sup> The sentiment conveyed, in this motto, naturally suggested itself to his mourning son from what the father said a little before his death, viz. that a man might be as effectually murdered in Newgate as at Tyburn. He died there, January 19th, 1685, aged 72, having been a prisoner four months. A nobleman, having heard of his happy release, said to the king, "May it please your majesty, Jenkin has got his liberty." Upon which he asked with eagerness, "Aye! who gave it him?" The nobleman replied, "A greater than your majesty, the King of kings:" with which the king seemed greatly struck, and remained silent.—*See Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial*, vol. i. p. 100.



in opposition to it. He and several young gentlemen rode down, from London, into the west, a little before the duke of Monmouth landed; and were taken up on suspicion, and thrown into Ilchester gaol, where they lay till the duke came and released them; in whose army Mr. Jenkin continued till the rout at Sedgemoor. He was tried and condemned at Dorchester. When he was apprised of the uncertainty of procuring his pardon, he replied, "Well, death is the worst they can do; and I bless GOD, that will not surprise me, for I hope my great work is done." So far from being dejected at the prospect of it, he did not appear to lose any of his natural liveliness and spirits, and was rather censured as inconsiderate of his condition; to which he answered, "Truly this is so much my natural temper, that I cannot tell how to alter it; but I bless GOD, I have thought, and do think seriously of my eternal concerns. I do not allow myself to be vain; but I find cause to be cheerful, for my peace is made with GOD, through Jesus Christ, my Lord. This is my only ground of comfort and cheerfulness, the security of my interest in Christ, for I expect nothing but death; and without this, I am sure death would be most dreadful; but having the good hope of this, I cannot be melancholy." When he was urged to attempt an escape, under disguise, he declined it, saying, "No, I cannot tell how to disturb myself about it; and methinks it is not my business, now I have other things to take up my thoughts. If GOD saw good to deliver me, he would open some door; but seeing he has not, it is more for the honour of his name we should die, and so be it." When no prospect of saving his life was left,

though interest was made, and several schemes formed with that view, he spoke much of the admirableness of GOD's providence in those things that seem most against us, bringing the greatest good out of them ; " For," said he, " we can see but a little way : GOD is only wise in all his disposals of us : if we were left to choose for ourselves, we should choose our own misery."

The sentiments, with which he reflected on the part he had acted, appear from a letter to his mother, on the night preceding his execution :—" I bless GOD," says he, " I die with a clear conscience ; and though I have deserved much worse, at the hands of GOD, for my past sins, than I am like to undergo, yet I count, with respect to man, I die a martyr for the protestant religion, and merely for doing my duty, in opposing that flood of popery, which seemed to be just overwhelming the church and interest of Christ, in these nations ; and I wish, that the prudentialists of our age, that have withdrawn their helping hand from so glorious a design, do not, within a few days, feel the smart they have deserved by this their baseness." The honourable thoughts he entertained concerning the divine providence, are expressed in a letter to his sister, a few days before this :—" And now, dear sister, I take my leave of you, and commit you to the protection of that GOD, who has made every thing beautiful in his time, and will shew you the meaning of this providence, which now we do not understand ; to whom, I trust, I am now going, and in the enjoyment of whose presence, I doubt not but ere long you will meet, dear sister, your affectionate brother."

Many such devout and rational sentiments he delivered, under the view of his death. When it was observed, that the apostles died a violent death, he replied, "Nay, a greater than the apostles, our Lord himself died, not only a shameful, but a violent death;" adding, "This manner of death hath been the most terrible thing in the world to my thoughts; but, I bless GOD, now I am neither afraid nor ashamed to die."

The same cheerfulness and serenity of mind appeared to the last; and, indeed, increased, and brightened his countenance with comfort and joy; insomuch that some of his enemies, who had censured his cheerfulness as inconsideration, and expected to see him much surprised, professed themselves astonished, that so young a man, (of no more than one or two and twenty,) should leave the world, and go through death as he did.<sup>1</sup>

*Captain Hucker.*

Mr. Hucker, whom we have noticed particularly in a former chapter, having conducted himself, under confinement, with a christian spirit, displayed a pious fortitude, in his last moments, which astonished the spectators.

*Mr. Gatehill.*

Another, out of the nineteen executed at the same time, was Mr. Gatehill, constable of the hundred, who had been forced, against his inclination, by some of the duke's party, to execute a warrant for bringing in provisions for the army. As he was drawn to execution, he looked on the people, and said, "A populous town: GOD bless it!"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 122—128.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. 214, 215.

In the register of burials for the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, during the year 1685, there is a note by the vicar, the Rev. Walter Harte, in these words: "June, 1685.—Burials, &c. interrupted by Monmouth's rebellion." There are only two entries of burials in the month of June, 1685; but, in the previous months of that year, the entries are from fourteen to twenty-six monthly.

Extracts from the register of burials for the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, for 1685 and 1686.

1685.	<i>Buried.</i>	1685.	<i>Buried.</i>
July 16.	Randolph Cans, a soldier.	Oct. 27.	Rebel soldier.
28.	Bryant, a soldier.	—	William More, king's soldier.
Aug. 12.	Rebel soldier.	28.	James Whetham, rebel, executed.
16.	Ditto ditto.	Nov. 5.	Rebel soldier.
25.	King's soldier.	8.	Edward Seymour, king's soldier.
Sept. 1.	3 rebels executed.	15.	Rebel soldier.
2.	Rebel soldier.	20.	Joseph Newbery, rebel.
6.	Leeke, a king's soldier.	24.	Rebel soldier.
8.	Rebel soldier.	Dec. 9.	Rebel soldier.
12.	Ditto ditto.		
20.	2 rebel soldiers.		
22.	Simon Hamlyn, rebel, executed.	1686.	
26.	Rebel soldier.	Jan. 7.	Rebel soldier.
Oct. 1.	King's soldier.	13.	Matthew Edwards, king's soldier.
—	Benjamin Hewlyn,	Mar. 4.	2 rebels.
—	William Jenkins,	—	King's soldier.
—	Henry Lisle,	7.	Rebel soldier.
2.	John Savidge.	10.	Ditto ditto.
5.	Rebel soldier.	20.	A prisoner.
10.	Ditto ditto.	April 18.	Sprout, a soldier.
15.	Ditto ditto.	23.	King's soldier.

Rebels executed.

In the register of burials for the parish of Taunton St. James, there are the following entries relating to this unhappy period:

1685.

July 9, was buried John Gotrell, executed for treason against his majesty.

The same day was buried John Borges, executed for treason against his majesty.

The 9 day, was executed John Grinslade, for treason against his majesty, but buried the 10 day of July, in the year 1685.

*Note,* This entry has been partially erased with a pen. The name is entered again in the next page of the register.

The 9 day, was executed William Sharpe, for treason against his majesty, 1685, but buried the 9 of July.

The 9 of July, was executed Simon Sayer, for treason against his majesty, but buried the 10 of July, 1685.

July the 9 day, was executed Richard Barton, for treason against his majesty, but was buried the 10 day of July, in the year 1685.

July the 9 day, was executed Abraham Pinney, for treason against his majesty, but was buried the 10 of July, in the year 1685.

July the 9 day, was executed William Bowne, for treason against his majesty, but buried the 10 day of July, in the year 1685.

July the 9 day, was executed James Besson, for treason against his majesty, but buried the 12 day of July, in the year 1685.

July 10 day, was buried John Grinslade.

*Note,* This appears to be a second entry, in the room of the former, erased.

*Note,* The preceding nine persons appear to be part of the nineteen who were executed by colonel Kirke, under martial law, on the Cornhill, on his arrival at Taunton from Sedgemoor, on Thursday July the 9th, 1685.

Oct. 1, 1685, was buried Pearce Morring, executed for treason against his majesty, of Taunton Magdalen.

Oct. 1, was buried William Shachell, (Satchell,) executed for treason against his majesty.

Oct. 2, was buried John Trickey, executed for treason against his majesty.

*Note,* These three persons were tried before judge Jeffreys, and, having been found guilty, were executed, with sixteen others, on the 30th Sept. 1685.

1685.	<i>Buried.</i>	1685.	<i>Buried.</i>
Oct. 7.	Stephen Letor, a soldier.	Nov. 25.	James Tornor, a soldier.
9.	Andrar Hontar, ditto.	29.	Anthony James, ditto.
17.	John Bromshet, ditto.	1686.	
Nov. 2.	William Lion, a soldier under the command of captain George Littlelton.	April 15.	William Bockland, a soldier.
		17.	Henry Venne, a soldier.

*Note,* These eight persons, it is probable, were soldiers in the royal army, as in St. Mary's register, Monmouth's soldiers are always called "Rebel," or "Rebel soldiers."

Besides the courage and cheerfulness, with which these persons, and others, who laid down their lives in the same cause, died ; it was also remarked, that most, if not all, dropt expressions, which not only indicated their confidence in the final success of the cause of liberty and protestantism, for which they suffered, but forebodings of that great deliverance, which providence, in a few years, accomplished by the prince of Orange.

Mr. Nelthorpe said, " GOD had, in his wonderful providence, made him, and others, instruments, not only in what was already fallen out, but he believed, for hastening *some other great work*, he had yet to do in these kingdoms."

Captain Annesley declared his expectation, " that, though it had pleased the all-wise GOD, for reasons best known to himself, now to blast their designs ; *yet, he would deliver his people, by ways they knew not, nor thought of.*"

Mr. Hewling expressed the same hope, saying, " I question not, but, in his own time, GOD *will raise up other instruments to carry on the same cause they died for, for his own glory.*"

Mr. Larke declared, " that he was confident GOD would avenge their blood."

Mr. Perrott died, desiring " all not to be faint-hearted, because of their fall, and to think that there were no hopes remaining ;" adding, " he verily believed, GOD *would yet work out deliverance for them ;* and, at the time they were in the greatest extremity, that would be GOD's opportunity. Put your whole

trust and confidence, and dependence, in the LORD, and he will never leave you nor forsake you.”<sup>1</sup>

Such language, so strongly expressive of the firmness of their minds, conveying so full a conviction of the rectitude of their cause, and so lively a persuasion of its final success, naturally made strong impressions on the spectators. It must appear to those who review it at this distance of time, as something extraordinary; especially, when it is considered, that these were the

<sup>1</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 103, 104, and p. 189. Mr. Sampson Larke, who was executed at Lyme, the 12th of September, was an eminent, pious, aged non-conformist minister, very charitable to the poor, and assiduous in the duties of his function. His death was greatly lamented, not only by his congregation, but by the inhabitants of the town. As he was about to address the populace before his execution, he was interrupted by the guard, with this laconic observation; “that the work of the day was so great, they could not afford him time.” To which he replied, “he could make application, where he should not meet with interruption:” and so prayed with great devotion and fervour.—Mr. Nelthorpe was one of those, whom lady Lisle had sheltered. He was accused and executed for being concerned in a design to assassinate king Charles II. and the duke of York; which, in his last moments, he explicitly and solemnly denied. He came over with the duke of Monmouth; was first committed to prison at Salisbury, and then removed to Newgate. He was executed the 30th of October. He generously disdained the offer made him of saving his own life, by becoming a witness against others. The agitation of his mind, during his close confinement, at length terminated in distraction; but, before his execution, the exercise of his judgment and understanding returned; and he died, not only with composedness of mind, but with comfort and joy; addressing the spectators in a speech, at once pertinent and recollected, and breathing suitable sentiments of charity and devotion.—*Western Martyrology*, p. 173, & p. 130–140.

sentiments of persons of different sexes and ages, and in different places ; uttered in a calm and serene state of mind ; and that they were afterwards signally confirmed by the correspondent event. If we do not ascribe these declarations to a divine foresight, we must confess, that they could arise from nothing short of full, rational views of the nature and merits of the cause, in which they had engaged, as involving in it the civil and religious interests of the nation ; and an unusual comprehension of mind, looking above present discouraging and dark appearances. And it is not to be doubted, but that the very disappointment and sufferings, which they experienced, did really operate to bring about a revolution ; to make it an object of more general and ardent desire ; and even to precipitate it, by leaving king James, for the present, more at liberty to push his unconstitutional, oppressive, and odious measures.

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But, waiving these reflexions, it is time to return to Taunton, which was marked, besides the executions we have mentioned, with other scenes of oppression and cruelty. The maidens, who presented the colours to the duke of Monmouth, though some of them were children, eight or ten years of age, were not suffered to escape the rigour of the chief justice's inquisition. Miss Mary Blake, for making the colours presented to the duke, was committed to Dorchester gaol, where she died, says Dr. Toulmin, of the small-pox, which disease then prevailed in the prison.\*

\* Mr. H. Norris, of Taunton, has in his possession, the copy of a pardon, granted to this young lady, by king James II. dated the



Another of these young ladies surrendered herself in the court, begging mercy from the judge ; who, when she was produced before him, looked on her with a very fierce countenance, and, raving, commanded the gaoler to take her. This struck such terror into the poor girl, that, pulling her hood over her face, she fell a weeping ; and the gaoler removing her immediately out of the court, she died, not many hours after, through fear.

This minister of royal resentment being at length tired with executions, and glutted with human blood, the king issued a general pardon ; but these young ladies were amongst those whose names were excepted from receiving any benefit from it. The view of the court was to raise sums of money, for their ransom, from

15th of July, (the first anniversary of Monmouth's death,) in the second year of his reign, so that it is probable, that the account of her death, in Dorchester gaol, is founded in mistake. In this record, she is called "*Sarah Blake, late of Taunton, in our county of Somerset, spinster ;*" but it does not express any particular crime of which she had been charged or convicted, the king merely pardoning her in the following general terms :—" James the second, &c. Know ye, that moved by compassion, we have of our special favour, and of our certain knowledge and mere motion, pardoned, remitted, and released, and do by these presents pardon, remit, and release, to Sarah Blake, late of Taunton, in our county of Somerset, spinster, or by whatsoever name, surname, or addition, the said Sarah Blake may be known, all and all manner of treasons, misprisions of treason, conspiracies, seditions, insurrections, wavings of wars, and unlawful assemblies, by her, the said Sarah Blake, by herself alone, or with any other person, heretofore, against our royal person and the laws and statutes of our kingdom of England, done, committed, or perpetrated," &c. &c.

I have always been of opinion that there were two sisters of the

their parents; which were granted, as a Christmas-box, to the maids of honour. The amount of the demand was seven thousand pounds. Mr. Bird, the town-clerk, would have officiously intruded himself, as agent, into the management of this business; but his services were refused. The duke of Somerset took up the affair in favour of the court ladies; and solicited, by letter, the assistance of sir Francis Warre, bart. of Hestercombe, to whom he applied to have the mistress and the maidens, of whose names he sent a list, taken into custody. He requested this gentleman to recommend some person, in whom he could confide, to take the active part under his direction, and whom, by a letter of attorney, the maids of honour might employ, to sue the girls. But sir Francis Warre, unwilling to be concerned in the business, represented to the duke, that the school-mistress was a woman of mean birth, and that the scholars worked the banner by her orders, without knowing of any offence.<sup>1</sup> On this, further proceedings

name of Blake at the school where these colours were wrought; that they were both taken into custody; and that one of them died in prison, and the other was pardoned. H. N.

<sup>1</sup> On the information of C. W. Bampfylde, esq. from whom Dr. Toulmin was favoured with the following copies of the duke of Somerset's letters:—

I doe here send you a list of the Taunton Maydes you living soe nere to Taunton makes me think that you know some of them, therefore pray send me word by the first oportunity whether any of these are in custody and whoe they are, and if any one of these are not in custody lett them be secured especially the Schoole Mistresse and likewise send me word if you know any one of these because there are some friends of mine that I believe upon easy terms might get theire pardon of the king, pray send me an answer by the first

were dropped ; but not till the sums of one hundred pounds, and fifty pounds, had been gained from the parents of some of them.

opertunity and in so doing this you will oblige your humble Servant  
*London, Dec. 12, 1685.* **SOMERSET.**

(The address torn off.)

I have acquainted the Maydes of honour with this buisnesse of Mr. Birde, and they doe all say that he never had any authority from them to proceede in this matter and that they have this post writt to him not to trouble himselfe any more in this affaire soe that if you will proceede on this matter according to my former letter you will infinitely oblige your humble Servant

*Jan. 14, 1685.*

**SOMERSET.**

If you can secure any of them pray doe and lett me have account of this letter as soon as you can.

For Sir Francisse Warre, Bart.

To be left at post-house in Taunton, Somersets :

We have here thought fitt that things would be better managed if there was a letter of Attorney given to some body (that you should think fitt and capable of) for to ayde and assist you in it that there may be noe other to transact this buisnesse but your selfe and another of your recommending that should bussle and stir about to ease you, if that you know of any such man that you can trust pray lett me know it by the first opertunity that the Maydes of honour may signe his letter of Attorney, pray lett them know that if they doe thus put it off from time to time that the Maydes of honour are resolved to sue them to an Outlary, so that pray do you advise them to comply with what is reasonable (which I think 7000 is) for them : I must beg a thousand times over your pardone for giving you this trouble and will never omitt any thing wherein I can serve you Sir  
 I am your very humble Servant

*London, Jan. 21, 1685-6.*

**SOMERSET.**

For Sir Francisse Warre, Bart.

To be left at the post-house in Taunton, Somersetts :

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## DUKE OF MONMOUTH'S ADHERENTS.

*Ford, Lord Grey.*

Among the adherents of Monmouth, by far the most remarkable was Ford, lord Grey of Werke. He was the eldest son of Ralph, second lord Grey, by Catherine, daughter of Sir Edward Ford, of Hartington, in the county of Sussex, knt. In 1682, he was tried in the court of king's bench, for seducing and ruining lady Henrietta Berkeley,<sup>1</sup> his wife's sister, and found guilty; but the matter was afterwards compromised. This intrigue fixed a very deep stain upon his private character; nor were the circumstances attending it, by any means, calculated to extenuate his guilt. His ancient family, however, his extensive influence, arising from his large possessions, and his talents, which appear to have been very considerable, might, in some degree, countervail the odium which he had incurred, on account of his private vices.

In 1683, on the discovery of the Rye-house plot, lord Grey fled to Holland; but returned with Monmouth, and behaved, as we have already shewn, in the most disgraceful manner at the battle of Sedgemoor; his conduct in which, has been generally attributed to cowardice; but subsequent events induce a belief, that there was in it a great mixture of treachery. He wrote a tract, entitled, "The Secret History of the Rye-house Plot;" but of this *Secret History* there are two opinions: whilst, on the one hand, it is described by Mr. Hume, as the most full and authentic account of all those transactions, and as being, in the main, confirmed by bishop Sprat, and even by Burnet, as well as by the trials and dying confessions of the conspirators themselves; it is, on the other hand, represented by Mr. Fox, as an outrage on common sense, to call it an *authentic* account, because it was written, as lord Grey himself states in his letter to James II. while the question of his lordship's pardon was yet pending. Lord Rochester, the son of the earl of Clarendon, received sixteen thousand pounds for making his peace with the king.

<sup>1</sup> See the trial of Ford, lord Grey of Werke, Robert Charnock; Anne Charnock, David Jones, Frances Jones, and Rebecca Jones, for stealing away and debauching the lady Henrietta Berkeley, in the State Trials, 1682.

The letters, which have been published as having passed between these lovers, are fictitious.

The most probable account of lord Grey's conduct at Sedgemoor is to be found in the words of a contemporary of rank, John, first viscount Lonsdale, in "A Memoir of the Reign of James II." printed by the liberality of the present earl of Lonsdale, but not published for sale.

"The duke of Monmouth, finding Bristol possessed by the king's forces, returned back again, and entered Bridgwater, whilst the king's forces, under the command of lord Feversham, lay encamped upon Sedgemoor, some three miles distant from the town, covered with a ditch. The duke, in hopes to surprise them, issued out in the night, and was so far prosperous, as to miss colonel Oglethorpe, who was gone to the very town of Bridgwater, to gain intelligence. And the king's horse, being quartered at a little village, a quarter of a mile off, where my lord Feversham was also, was said not to be in all the readiness that was necessary. But however, the horse, under the conduct of my lord Grey, did so little, running away at the very first, that there was no great want of the king's horse to oppose them. The foot, indeed, fought better; and two field-pieces, they had, did some execution. But the horse being gone, the matter was grown desperate; and herein the duke of Monmouth lost much of his reputation for courage; for, instead of dying in the field, as was expected, he left his men fighting, and endeavoured to escape in company with my lord Grey; but was, within two days, taken, among some bushes, hid, with a pocket full of peas, which he was forced to gather for food. He was brought up to London; dined at Clifford's lodgings, where he saw the king; and both there, and by letters, asked for pardon. What arguments he had, to hope it could be granted, were not certain. Within four days, he was executed upon Tower-Hill, suffering four, if not five blows of the axe; of which, though he seemed fearful, from my lord Russell's case, who had done so before, he died otherways with great constancy.

"My lord Grey's conduct, in all this business, gave the censorious world leave to say, that he betrayed him; and that he triumphed in the revenge, for private injuries received in his family; for, besides the failure of the horse, under his conduct, he, after their being taken, seemed rather pleased than fearful: his talk was of hounds and hunting; and when the duke, at Mr. Chiffinch's, complained of a cold he had got, he, in a scoff, told him, his uncle had a cure

to be applied in a few days. This conduct, added to the former escape<sup>1</sup> out of the hands of a messenger, in a hackney coach, made the world almost assured of what they suspected; and, I have been informed, that one major Holmes discerned the thing so plainly, that he told the duke, three days before the battle at Sedgemoor, that my lord Grey was certainly either a coward or a knave; that, if he would give him leave, he would secure him, without which he despaired of success. The duke made answer, that "it was then too late."

"Major Holmes was sent into the country and hanged, whilst my lord Grey had his pardon, and became an evidence against several." (Memoir by Viscount Lonsdale, p. 12, 13.)

After the revolution, lord Grey had interest enough to be created **VISCOUNT GLENDALE, and EARL OF TANKERVILLE**, in 1695. On the 1st of June, 1699, he was appointed one of the lords of the treasury; and on the 16th of November, the same year, first lord of the treasury, in which office he was replaced on the 9th of December, 1700, by lord Godolphin. He died June 25th, 1701, having married lady Mary Berkeley, fourth daughter of George, earl of Berkeley, by whom he left an only daughter,

Lady Mary Grey, who married, in 1695, Charles Bennet, lord Ossulston, who, in consequence of that marriage, was created **EARL OF TANKERVILLE**, on October 19th, 1714. She died May 31, 1710.

Ralph Grey, his brother, succeeded as fourth **LORD GREY OF WERE**, but died without issue, 1704, when the title became extinct.

### *Lady Wentworth.*

Harriet, lady Wentworth, was a peeress in her own right, and daughter of Thomas, lord Wentworth, of Nettlestead, by his wife Philadelphia, daughter of sir Ferdinando Carey. She succeeded her father in the barony of Wentworth, on the 7th of March, 1664, and died, unmarried, the 23d of April, 1686, surviving the duke of Monmouth only about nine months. She was a woman of an elegant person, and engaging manners.

There is a whole-length portrait of her ladyship, engraved by R. Williams, after sir Godfrey Kneller.

<sup>1</sup> This alludes to his escape, after he was apprehended for being concerned in the Rye-House plot.

Her father, the lord Wentworth, was the eldest son of Thomas, earl of Cleveland, and died during his father's life-time. He behaved with extraordinary bravery against the parliament's forces, during the Cromwell usurpation.

*Lieut.-Colonel Abraham Holmes.*

He was executed at Lyme, on the 12th of September, 1685. He was an old and gallant officer, who had served under Cromwell with distinguished reputation. He accompanied the duke of Monmouth to Holland, by whom he was made a major-general. In the action at Philip's-Norton, one of his arms was shot to pieces, so that it hung only by the flesh ; and in consequence of this, being soon taken, he was stripped by the soldiers, and carried naked before a justice of the peace, who humanely clothed him. His shattered arm being an incumbrance to him, he laid it on a dresser, and cut it off himself with the cook-maid's knife. He was hanged on the very spot, where he landed with the duke.

*Colonel Arthur Matthews.*

He was executed at Lyme, with eleven others, on the 12th of September, 1685. He died very heroically, forgiving the executioner at his earnest request, but advising him to leave off his bloody trade ; who replied, that he was forced to it against his mind.

*Dr. Benjamin Temple.*

Dr. Temple came from Nottingham, and, going to Holland to improve himself in his profession, met with the duke of Monmouth, who engaged him as his physician and surgeon. He knew nothing of the duke's intention of invading England, till they had been some time at sea. Yet notwithstanding this, no interest could save him. He therefore resigned himself to his fate. He was executed at Lyme, on the 12th of September, 1685.

SKETCHES OF JUDGE JEFFREYS, COLONEL KIRKE, AND  
THE EARL OF FEVERSHAM.

*Judge Jeffreys.*

It is not to be wondered at, that the name of Jeffreys has been, ever since, odious in the west of England ; and continued, while the memory of his transactions was fresh, to excite indignation and

horror.' It was the name of a murderer, in the robes of the lord chief justice, openly trampling upon the laws themselves. The severities and cruelties, which he practised, appear to have been very agreeable to king James. Burnet says, "That which brought all Jeffreys's excesses to be imputed to the king himself, and to the orders given by him, was, that the king had a particular account of all his proceedings written and sent to him every day. And he took pleasure to relate them, in the drawing-room, to foreign ministers, and at his table, calling it *Jeffreys's Campaign*; speaking of all he had done, in a style, that neither became the majesty, nor the mercifulness of a great prince. Dykveld, one of the ambassadors, whom the States General had sent over, to congratulate the king on his accession to the throne, told me," says Burnet, "that the king talked so often of these things, in his hearing, that he wondered to see him break out into such indecencies."

Jeffreys, after his barbarous expedition, was heard to boast, with a sort of brutish pleasure, "that he had hanged more men than all the judges of England, since William the Conqueror;" a boast, it is well observed, much like that of the duke of Alva's, whose blood-thirstiness seemed to be infused into him. Some catholics have attempted to exculpate king James, from the charge of authorizing and approving the cruel measures of Jeffreys's tribunal, and have said, that he expressed his indignation at them; ; but the fact, as Burnet has stated it, militates against this defence. For Jeffreys returned triumphantly to London, and was received with open arms, by the king; who created him a baron, a dignity, to which no judge had been, for several ages, advanced, and which was generally looked upon as inconsistent with the character; and soon after, he was placed at the head of the highest tribunal in the kingdom, being made lord chancellor, "in consideration of the many eminent and faithful services he had rendered the crown, as well in the late

1 I have seen an old woman, says Granger, (Biogr. Hist. vol. iv. p. 309.) who kept a little ale-house in the West, kindle into rage, and melt into pity, upon relating the cruelties of Jeffreys, and the catastrophe of Monmouth. I concluded that she caught both these passions from her mother, who, she told me, "was an eye-witness of the shocking barbarities of those lamentable times." It is remarkable that the late countess of Pomfret met with very rude insults from the populace on the western road, only because she was the granddaughter of the inhuman Jeffreys.



king's time, as since his majesty's accession to the throne." And when Mr. Tutchin afterwards visited him in the Tower, he himself declared, "that his instructions were much more severe than the execution of them, and that, at his return, he was snubbed at court, for being too merciful." As much as these imputations on the king may shock the mind, they are naturally resolved into the despotic aims which directed his government. James was a tyrant, and all tyrants are cruel; and it is a maxim which regulates their councils, "That, as to the quantity of blood it may cost, to complete their designs, it ought not to be taken at all into the account, or considered of any consequence."<sup>1</sup> To such sanguinary sentiments are the hearts of despots reconciled, nay, familiarized.

Jeffreys was the sixth son of John Jeffreys, and Margaret, daughter of sir Thomas Ireland, of Beausey, near Warrington. He was born at Acton, near Wrexham, and had his first education at the free-school at Shrewsbury, from which he was removed to that of Westminster. He never had an academical education, but was placed immediately after leaving Westminster school in the Inner Temple, where he was chiefly supported by his grandmother. He was never regularly called to the bar. The plague, which was then making great ravages in the neighbourhood of London, was the means of first introducing him into notice in his profession; for, in 1666, he put on a barrister's gown, and pleaded at the Kingston assizes, where few counsel chose to attend; and from that time he acted without any notice being taken of his obtrusion.

In 1680, he was called to the degree of serjeant at law; and, being the first on the roll, was, consequently, the king's serjeant. As it is usual to present the king with a ring on that occasion, Jeffreys, to shew his opinion of the divine right of kings, and his love of arbitrary power, took the motto, "*A Deo rex, a rege lex*;" that is, "The king from God, and the law from the king." He was soon after appointed chief justice of Chester, and on the 7th of November, 1681, was created a baronet. After this he rose with great rapidity. On the 28th of September, 1683, he was appointed chief justice of the court of king's bench, and in October, 1685, lord chancellor, and created

<sup>1</sup> This was the language of Joseph II. late emperor of Germany, with regard to the suppression of the revolution in the Netherlands. See his letters to general Dalton, in the Analytical Review, for February, 1790, p. 225.

a peer of the realm, by the title of lord Jeffreys, baron of Wem, in the county of Salop. His conduct as a judge was unrestrained by any principle, being devoted to the worst measures of a bigoted monarch, and an infatuated court.

On the abdication of James, Jeffreys endeavoured to escape from the kingdom, in the disguise of a sailor. Roger North, who was contemporary with him, and who knew him personally, has given, in his *Life of the Lord Keeper North*, a particular account of the manner of his being discovered and apprehended; and, as his account is somewhat curious, it is here inserted in his own words:—

“It was common for Jeffreys to use such Billingsgate language, as should not come out of the mouth of any man. He called it *giving a lick with the rough side of his tongue*. It was ordinary to hear him say, *Go, you filthy, lousy, nifty rascal*; with much more of like elegance. Scarce a day passed that he did not chide some one or other of the bar, when he sat in the chancery; and it was commonly a lecture of a quarter of an hour long. And they used to say, *This is your's; my turn will be to-morrow*. He seemed to lay nothing of his business to heart, nor care what he did, or left undone; and spent in the chancery court what time he thought fit to spare. Many times, on days of causes, at his house, the company have waited five hours in a morning; and after eleven, he hath come out inflamed, and staring like one distracted. And that visage he put on when he animadverted on such as he took offence at, which made him a terror to real offenders, whom also he terrified with his face and voice, as if the thunder of the day of judgment broke over their heads. He loved to insult, and was bold without check; but that only when his place was uppermost. One of these intemperances was fatal to him. There was a scrivener of Wapping brought to hearing for relief against a bond. The contingency of losing all being shewed, the bill was going to be dismissed; but one of the plaintiff's counsel said, that he was a strange fellow, and sometimes went to church, sometimes to conventicles; and none could tell what to make of him; and it was thought he was a trimmer. At that the chancellor fired: *A trimmer!* said he, *I have heard much of that monster, but never saw one. Come forth, Mr. Trimmer; turn you round, and let us see your shape*; and at that rate talked so long, that the poor fellow was ready to drop under

him ; but at last the bill was dismissed with costs, and he went his way. In the hall, one of his friends asked him how he came off. *Came off ?* said he ; *I am escaped from the terrors of that man's face, which I would scarce undergo again to save my life ; and I shall certainly have the frightful impression of it as long as I live.* Afterwards, when the prince of Orange came, and all was in confusion, this lord chancellor, being very obnoxious, disguised himself, in order to go beyond sea. He was in a seaman's garb, and drinking a pot in a cellar. This scrivener came into the cellar after some of his clients ; and his eye caught that face, which made him start ; and the chancellor, seeing himself eyed, feigned a cough, and turned to the wall, with his pot in his hand. But *Mr. Trimmer* went out, and gave notice that he was there ; whereupon the mob flowed in, and he was in extreme hazard of his life ; but the lord mayor, (sir John Chapman,) saved him, and lost himself. For the chancellor being hurried with such croud and noise before him, and appearing so dismally, not only disguised, but disordered ; and there having been an amity betwixt them, as also a veneration on the lord mayor's part ; he had not spirits to sustain the shock, but fell down in a swoon ; and, in not many hours after, died."—*Life of the Lord Keeper North*, p. 219.

Jeffreys died in the Tower, on the 18th of April, 1689, either from hard drinking,<sup>1</sup> or a broken heart, and so was preserved from the infamy of a public execution.<sup>2</sup>

### *Colonel Kirke.*

To the detail of cruelties already given, which were practised under the cloke of a judicial process, must be added the military executions of colonel Kirke, whose violence and barbarity surpassed, if possible, the proceedings of Jeffreys. He was an officer in the king's army, at the battle of Sedgemoor ; and three days after the event of that battle, he came to Taunton with a number of prisoners, and two carts full of wounded men. He immediately hanged nineteen of these, on the Cornhill, by martial law, their wounds still bleeding, without any form of trial, or even suffering their wives

<sup>1</sup> He is said to have died of a disease occasioned by drinking brandy, to kill the compunctions of a terrified conscience.—*Seward's Anecdotes*, vol. li. p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Although dead, he was excepted in the act for the king's and queen's most general and free pardon, 1689, 3 William and Mary.

and children to speak to them, or to soothe their last agonies by a farewell embrace. While the executioner was performing the mournful duties of his office, Kirke, with his characteristic barbarity, commanded the fifes to play, the trumpets to sound, and the drums to beat, that the music might drown the cries of the dying victims, and the lamentations of their relatives, and the populace. The mangled bodies of these unfortunate men were, by his order, immediately stripped, their breasts cleft asunder, and their hearts, while warm, separately thrown into a large fire; and as each was cast in, a great shout was raised, the executioner saying, "There goes the heart of a *traitor*." When they were burnt, their quarters were boiled in pitch, and hung up at all the cross-ways, and public parts of the town and neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup>

He hanged one man, on the White Hart sign-post, three times, to try, whether he would own he had done amiss; but, when he expressed a resolute adherence to the cause in which he suffered, and said, if it were to do again, he would engage in it, Kirke directed he should be hung in chains. When the rope, with which a captain of W—— was hanged, broke, and gave him the flattering hope that he should save his life, a ring-rope was taken from a market-horse, and the execution completed. As no executioner could be procured in Somersetshire, the colonel sent to Exeter for one belonging to the county of Devon, who, in discharging his office, was observed to be above his ancles in human blood.

Dr. Toulmin says, that "the name of *lambs*, which colonel Kirke gave to the soldiers, who were most ready and active in the service, marked the pleasure, with which he saw his cruel orders executed." There is here some mistake in Kirke's calling those soldiers "*lambs*," who were the most obedient in putting his cruel orders into execution. The truth is this: the second regiment of foot, of which Kirke was colonel, and which was in the battle of Sedgemoor, and marched thence with him to Taunton, was formed from four regiments disbanded at Tangier, where they had been in garrison, and was called "The Tangier Regiment." It bore then, as it does now, the device of a *lamb* in its colours; and from this circumstance,

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the parish register of Taunton Saint James, that nine of these unfortunate persons were interred in that church-yard. See their names in page 526.

and not from any particular cruelties of which the soldiers belonging to it were guilty, they were called, by Kirke, his "*lambs*," and, by others, "*Kirke's lambs*." But they were so called some time before Kirke's cruelties in the west. When Jeffreys opened his bloody commission at Taunton, this regiment composed his guards, and was cantoned on the piece of ground west of the castle, which has, ever since, been called *Tangier*, from the name of this regiment.

The colonel, one day, invited his officers to an entertainment, and, after dinner, commanded thirty men to be executed, by ten at a time, while the glass went round in three healths; one to the king, the second to the queen, and the third to judge Jeffreys, of whom news was just then received, that he was to try the rebels. When, in the last agonies of departing life, the feet of the dying were observed to shake, he would cry out, "They shall have music to their dancing;" and commanded the trumpets to sound, and the drums to beat, surrounded by the soldiers; with colours flying.<sup>1</sup> "This," observes bishop Burnet, "was both so illegal and inhuman, that it might have been expected that some notice would have been taken of it;" whereas Kirke was only chid for it.

But the most shocking outrage against all decency, generosity, and humanity, with which, *if it be true*, the character of colonel Kirke is blackened, is his conduct to a beautiful young woman, whom he is said to have decoyed to his embraces, with the promise of sparing the life of a person, endeared to her by blood or affection, and to have conducted, in the morning, to see the person, for whom she had made the sacrifice of her virtue, hanging on the sign-post of the inn, where he had glutted his brutal lust. Shame, remorse, and distraction are said to have seized the unhappy, injured fair one, and she died within a few days.

Dr. Toulmin cautions his readers, by observing, that this horrid fact is related in a manner, that intimates some doubt of its credibility. The truth of it, at the time he wrote, was doubted, and discussed in a periodical work of that day.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, it is alleged against the reality of it, that there is a disagreement in the evidence. One writer says, that the young woman yielded herself to

<sup>1</sup> Western Martyrology, p. 216. Bishop Burnet's History of his own Times, vol. ii. p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Gentleman's Mag. May, 1789, p. 438, and Feb. 1790, p. 104.

Kirke's desires, for the sake of her husband, another for her father, and a third for her brother; and though jealousy might have urged the execution of a husband, yet, in case the person were a father or a brother, it is not to be conceived what end his death would have answered: that it is incredible, that a man who could have committed such an inhuman action, such a wanton barbarity, could afterwards have been *consulted* with the Sidneys and the Cavendishes, on the plan for the revolution; or that the glorious William could have armed such a wretch in the cause of LIBERTY: that the original story, which party virulence applied to Kirke, may be found, if not in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, yet in No. 491, of the *Spectator*; where we are told, that the duke of Burgundy executed Rhynsault, governor of Zealand, for having abused the credulity of Sapphira, the wife of Paul Danvelt, under the idea of pardoning a supposed crime of her husband's, and then, deviating from the terms of the agreement, set up false witnesses against him, that procured his execution; or that the Roman history furnishes the prototype of Kirke, in a rich citizen, who redeemed a debtor to the Roman treasury, condemned to be hanged, A. D. 340, on the ignoble terms of abusing his bed, and afterwards deceived him. To these arguments it may be added, that writers who are by no means disposed to be partial or favourable to the reputation of colonel Kirke, as bishop Burnet, the author of the *Western Martyrology*, and Oldmixon, bring no such charge against him; and that afterwards, the people of Taunton, in commemoration of his relieving Londonderry, when besieged by James II. in 1689, devoted an evening to the drinking of his health in public, the expenses of which may be now seen in an old church-book.

On the other hand, it is, and may be argued, that it is immaterial what relation the person, who suffered, bore to the deluded female; and that a variation in the account might easily take place, though the general fact was undeniable: that as to the purposes which the execution could serve, the whole conduct of Kirke shews, that he was not governed by reasons of equity, propriety, or utility; but hurried on by cruelty and revenge, the insolence of power, and the view of court-favour, whetted by the recent victory over reputed rebels: that it is not clear, that he *was consulted* on the plan of

the revolution ; or, if he were, his attachment to protestantism,<sup>1</sup> and his resolution and abilities, as an officer, would be considered, as entitling him to confidence and employment ; especially, when private virtue is not, generally, the rule of state measures, nor the ground of preferments, civil or military : that the resemblance between this and other stories, in ancient or modern times, is no proof, that the former was borrowed from the latter, for similar passions will, in different ages and countries, produce similar effects ; and the allowed truth of such stories renders this more credible, because they shew, that, disgraceful and shocking to human nature as are such instances of cruelty and barbarity, yet man is capable of such actions : that it is very improbable that the charge against Kirke could be borrowed from the fact in the Roman history, as the author of St. Augustine, in whom it is found, is not commonly known ; and as to the fact in the Spectator, this impeachment of colonel Kirke could not be derived from *that*, for it is conveyed in Pomfret's poem of "Cruelty and Lust," written years before, the author of which died in 1702, whereas the Spectator was not published till 1712 : that, besides this, the historians, Kennet and Echard, related this deed of Kirke's, before the appearance of that paper ; who would not have asserted such a circumstance, without some authority ; or, if they had done so, would certainly have been refuted by the other party at the very time. To these arguments it should be added, that in the town of Taunton, there has prevailed an unsuspecting tradition of it. And the celebration of Kirke's conduct at Londonderry, by the inhabitants of Taunton, goes no more to prove his innocence in this, than in other instances, where his character, undoubtedly, lies under a stigma. Nothing is more fluctuating than popular resentment or applause, and present joy obliterates, for a time, the remembrance of past injuries. Dr. Toulmin concludes by saying, that he has here endeavoured to state the evidence, relative to this horrid action, fully and impartially ; and will leave it to the reader to draw the conclusion for

<sup>1</sup> When Kirke was tampered with, in the reign of king James, to embrace popery, he replied ; " that he was already pre-engaged, having promised the emperor of Morocco, when in Tangier, that, if ever he changed his religion, he would turn Mahometan."

himself. Should he judge, that Kirke was guilty of the charge with which his name is reproached, it may still be supposed, that the matter was exaggerated. It might have been out of his power to have saved the life, which he actually intended to have preserved; and his conducting the unhappy damsel to the window, at that critical moment, might probably be the mere effect of accident.

‘The discrepancies which are met with in different authors, in their relation of this story, both as to place and person, render its authenticity exceedingly doubtful. The scene of action, says one, was probably at Exeter; but, says another, it is more likely that it was at Taunton. Tradition states, says one, that the lady was Miss Lucas; but, says another, it is probable that it was not Miss Lucas, and if it was not her, it could not possibly be Miss Hewling.’ A writer in the *Sherborne Weekly Miscellany*, for December, 1782, has the following remarks upon this story:—

“*Perhaps* Pomfret, in the first edition of his poems, related the transaction as perpetrated at *Exeter*, on account of Kirke’s having fought so heroically for king William, at Londonderry. But whether so or not, most authors, who have written on this subject, agree with regard to the fact; and *some of them* have laid the scene of action at the White Hart inn, in *Taunton*. I am inclined to think, from the traditional accounts, preserved by some of the old inhabitants of that town, that it must have been a Miss Lucas, whose credulity was abused by Kirke, under the idea of preserving the life of her father, he being hung by order of the savage general, under martial law, some time before the commission for trying the western rebels was issued. But, *if it was not* Miss Lucas, *it could not be* Miss Hewling, because her brothers, Benjamin and William, suffered under a judicial sentence, and it was therefore out of the power of Kirke to pardon them in the capacity of a general.”

‘A few years after Dr. Toulmin had published the first edition of this work, the following letter was printed in one of the London newspapers.’ The original is therein said to have been found among the papers of the late Dr. Smollett, author of the *History of England*,

<sup>1</sup> What has been related by several writers, of the ill-treatment of the sister of the two Hewlings, is contradicted by Mr. Hewling Luson, in the third volume of “*Letters by John Hughes, esq. and other eminent persons, deceased*,” published by Mr. Duncombe. *Granger’s Biogr. Hist.* vol. iv. p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> The “*Sun*,” London daily paper, Saturday, September 3d, 1796.



and was, in the year 1796, in the possession of a physician, at Wilmington, in North America. This letter throws new light on the above-mentioned subject, and exculpates colonel Kirke from that dreadful odium, with which history has transmitted his name to posterity. For the honour of human nature, and the British military character, it is devoutly hoped, that the story related by the writer may be true. The letter purports to be written by a Mr. John Merrill, to some person whose name does not appear, for the purpose of being laid before Dr. Smollett, and is dated from Poland-street, London, the 12th of March, 1759. It is as follows :—

“SIR,—The anecdote I told you I was desirous to convey to Dr. Smollett, was what you will find here below, in order to confute a vile and horrible story, falsely told of general Kirke. This story chiefly gained ground by a poem of Pomfret's, called *Cruelty and Lust*, and which is printed with his other works of that sort, and from thence has crept into those of writers of history, memoirs, &c.

“After the Monmouth rebellion was subdued, an order came from court to Kirke, then general of the troops in the west, to take out of the gaols twenty of the rebels, and have them executed by martial law. It is true, this was in defiance of the laws of the land ; but those were not then much regarded, when they stood in the way of those who were in power. Accordingly twenty of these rebels were taken out of the gaols, to be executed on a market-day, in (I think) the town of Taunton, in Somersetshire ; but I am not positively sure that was the town, though I am in my own mind pretty strongly persuaded it was.

“There being at that time a notion of a woman going in white, to beg publicly the life of a condemned person, the morning of the execution, some of the relations of one of them, thinking of this, obtained of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, (a lady of great and most amiable character, and for which she was deservedly famous all over the west,) to go in white, and beg the life of this person from the general, who, with several of his officers, was standing in a balcony to see the execution.

“She went to him when the criminals were on the cart, and already tied up to the gallows, and begged the life of the person above-mentioned. Kirke turned about to one Bush, a lieutenant, who stood by him, and who was remarkable for being the most

stupid fellow in the regiment, and said, in his short bluff way, "Go, and bid the executioner cut him from the gallows;" taking it for granted, that Bush, who stood close to him, heard who Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe had begged off. But he was mistaken; for that stupid fellow, Bush, not only had not attended to the name of the person Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe had interceded for, but even did not think to ask it, but went to the executioner, and said, "You must cut him down." The executioner replied, "Cut him down! which *him*? for there are twenty." Now it happened, that the man, who had been begged off, being attentive to his prayers, had not attended to any thing which had passed, so took no notice of what Bush said; but another of the criminals, who was minding something else besides his prayers, seeing a lady in white, in the balcony, with the general, and hearing a talk of cutting down, smelled out the thing, and told Bush, that he was the person the lady had begged off. Bush wisely took his word, and, turning to the executioner, said, "This is the man." Upon this, the executioner cut the rope, and immediately the man jumped out of the cart, and went away. Soon after, the signal was given for the cart to drive away, and the man, who was really begged off, was hanged, the truth being found out too late.

"This account I had more than once from Mr. Martin Killigrew, who was at that time an officer in general Kirke's regiment, and was upon the spot when the thing happened. This I can testify, as will, I dare say, if applied to, Mr. Bavenall, nephew to the said Mr. Killigrew, whose name was Lister, but he changed it to Killigrew, upon marrying one of sir Peter Killigrew's daughters, which daughter of sir Peter Killigrew's was sister to my wife's grandmother. I remember I asked Mr. Killigrew, if he knew of any thing relating to this affair he had not mentioned, which might have given rise to this report. He said he knew of none but the violent and universal hatred, which prevailed all over the west country against Kirke, and that outrageous passionate behaviour, which was so habitual to him, that it was become even his constant one, though it very seldom went beyond words.

"I have sent this to you, to communicate to Dr. Smollett; for as I look upon it to be the primary duty of an historian to convey to posterity the exact truth of things without partiality, and to do justice to the character of men, especially when they have been

falsely and injuriously represented; so I look upon it to be the indispensable duty of every man, as far as lies in his power, to furnish historians with those lights, which will enable them to do it. And in this instance, I have no other motive, than that of assisting the above-named gentleman in conveying truth to mankind, and doing justice to one, who, however faulty or criminal in other respects, is in this an innocent and injured man.

“The inaccuracy, and all other faults of this letter, I must desire you and Dr. Smollett to excuse, as the best style and manner I could make use of would be unworthy Dr. Smollett, or any other historian, and my only purpose is to convey to him the plain matter of fact, together with my proof, which he will make use of in the manner he thinks proper.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN MERRILL.”

“There is very little known respecting Kirke, except the tale of his barbarities in the west of England. Echard and Hume call him “a bold and loose soldier of fortune,” who had long served at Tangier, of which place he was governor, and had contracted, from his intercourse with the Moors, an inhumanity in military affairs, not known or practised in European countries.

“At the revolution, he deserted his old master, James II. and was employed in the service of William. The latter monarch, three days after he landed in this country, appointed Kirke a major-general, and in 1689, sent him with a body of troops to relieve Londonderry, then besieged by James, and a French force under general Rosene, which Kirke with some difficulty effected.

“In 1690, while William’s army was encamped at Carrick, general Kirke was ordered to Waterford; the garrison of which, consisting of two regiments, capitulated, upon condition of marching out with their arms and baggage.

“It is probable that Kirke died in 1691, as on the 18th of December in that year, he was succeeded, in the command of the 2d regiment of foot, by colonel William Selwyn. He married the lady Mary Howard, eldest daughter of George, fourth earl of Suffolk. There is not known to be any portrait of him extant.

“When he was afterwards upbraided with his cruelties by colonel

Foulkes, who was with the duke of Monmouth, and afterwards commanded a regiment in king William's service, he declared, that he did nothing, but by an express order from the king and his general; and protested, that his commission went farther; and that he had put a restraint upon the power and instructions that were given him.<sup>1</sup> Though it should not be ascribed to his humanity, but his avarice, it is certain, that many persons escaped by his pretended pardons, which he sold for twenty, thirty, and forty pounds apiece. They were not valid in law, yet they afforded those who purchased them time to settle their affairs, and retire to Holland and other places of shelter.

'Kirke's ordinary behaviour was exceedingly passionate; and when his regiment was out on a field-day, he would curse, swear, and threaten in the most outrageous manner. This behaviour was habitual to him, though it seldom went beyond words.

His military promotions were,

Colonel of the 4th foot, Nov. 27, 1680.

Colonel of the 2d foot, the Tangier regiment, Sept. 19, 1682.

Brigadier-general, May 11th, 1685.

Major-general, November 8th, 1688.

Lieutenant-general, December 22d, 1690.

Governor of Tangier.

### *Earl of Feversham.*

'Lewis de Duras, earl of Feversham, was a native of France. He was the son of the duke de Duras, and brother to the last duke of that name, as also to the duke de Lorge. His mother was sister to the great Turenne, of the princely house of Bouillon. After the restoration, he came to England, was naturalized by act of parliament, and behaved with great gallantry in the sea-fight with the Dutch, in 1665. When he first came to England, he bore the name of Durfort, and the title of marquis de Blanquefort. On the 19th of January, 1672, he was created baron Duras, of Holdenby, in the county of Northampton; and having married Mary, the eldest daughter and coheir of sir George Sondes, of Lees-court, in the county of Kent, who had been created earl of Feversham, the same title was limited to him, and he succeeded to it on the death of his

<sup>1</sup> History of William III. vol. i. p. 170. Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts, p. 705.

father-in-law, in 1677. Besides these honours, king Charles appointed him to the command of the third troop of horse-guards, afterwards promoted him to the second, and then to the first. Upon king James's accession, he was admitted into the privy council, and was, as we have already seen, commander-in-chief of the forces sent against the duke of Monmouth. When James was alarmed with the prince of Orange's design to invade the kingdom, he made the earl of Feversham general of the army; which he afterwards took care to disband, with all possible expedition, to prevent its revolting to the prince. He was, for this, and some other matters laid to his charge, confined, for a short time, in Windsor castle. He was a man of supple and insinuating character, and paid great attendance at court, in the reigns of James II. and William III. In 1679, he was appointed master of the horse to Catharine, queen of Charles II. and afterwards lord chamberlain to her majesty; and after she retired to Portugal, he had the management of her affairs, from which circumstance he acquired the nickname of "King Dowager." He was master of the Royal College of St. Catharine's, near the Tower. He died on the 8th of April, 1709, aged 68, and was buried in the Savoy, in the Strand, London, but removed, March 21st, 1740, to Westminster-abbey.

There are two engraved portraits of the earl of Feversham :

1. Mezzotinto, by J. Becket, after J. Riley.
2. In Grammont's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. by E. Scriven, after J. Riley.

The evil consequences of the defeat of the duke of Monmouth did not terminate with the severities of colonel Kirke in his military capacity, or of Jeffreys in his judicial office; but were deeply felt in the subsequent measures, which the king afterwards pursued, who now thought himself at liberty to act without control. It afforded him a pretence to increase the number of his standing forces, pleading that the militia was not to be depended on, and that he had suffered in his reputation, by being so miserably unprovided against the duke of Monmouth's wretched

attempt.<sup>1</sup> He violated the test law, by retaining in his army, against the remonstrance of the parliament, unqualified popish officers. He dissolved his parliament in resentment, and displayed, without disguise, his unbounded zeal for popery. In violation of the laws, a Roman prelate publicly made his entry into London, in the character of the pope's nuncio; and the duke of Somerset was disgraced for not paying him that respect which the laws had made criminal.<sup>2</sup> In like opposition and contempt of those laws, the earl of Castlemaine was despatched to Rome, with the train and pomp of ambassador extraordinary; with instructions to reconcile the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to the holy see, from which they had, for more than an age, fallen off by heresy. Though, from deep policy, the court of Rome gave him but a cold reception, yet the Jesuits entertained him with the greatest magnificence, and employed sculpture, painting, poetry, and rhetoric, to testify their respect for him and his royal master.

In prosecution of this design, James arrogated to himself a power to dispense with the laws. The doctrine advanced in the courts of justice, by his authority, was, that his declaration ought to be obeyed,

<sup>1</sup> Secret History of Charles II. and James II. p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> This nobleman, being first lord of the bed-chamber in waiting, was expected to assist in the ceremony of the nuncio's entry; but he told the king, he could not serve upon this occasion, being assured, it was contrary to law. The king asked him, if he did not know, that he was above the law. The other replied, if the king were, he himself was not above the law; for which he was dismissed from all his employments. Reresby's Memoirs, as quoted by Granger.—*Biographical History*.

if the king had been a Turk or a Jew ; and that, though any man might petition in his private affairs, yet, to petition about government was a libel, and of bad consequence.<sup>1</sup> But he not only assumed, but acted by this dispensing power. The force of various acts of parliament, and the statutes of the university of Oxford, were set aside by a dispensation, granted in May, 1686, to the master and fellows of University college, to absent themselves from the religious service of the church of England ; to another member of the university, to release him from any duties enjoined by the act of uniformity, or other acts ; and to John Massey, M. A. fellow of Merton college, to enjoy the deanery of Christ-church, without being obliged to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, without any test or sacrament, without any declaration or subscription with respect to religion, or performing any acts in conformity to the discipline and liturgy of the church of England. To reconcile the minds of the people to these stretches of prerogative, and to diffuse principles of slavery and despotism, Mr. Obadiah Walker had a licence, for twenty-one years, to print and sell, not exceeding in one year twenty thousand copies, of various books, in favour of the hierarchy, doctrines, services, and practices, of the church of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

In correspondence with these measures, and to bear down the laws and constitution of the realm, a new court of inquisition was erected, under the name of a commission for ecclesiastical affairs. This commission

<sup>1</sup> Justice Allibon's Charge at the assizes at Croydon. *Collectanea Curiosa*, vol. iv. No. 6, p. 397.

<sup>2</sup> *Collectanea Curiosa*, vol. i. No. 34—37.

was repugnant to an express act of parliament ; and though, somewhat to save appearances, some bishops of the church of England were named commissioners, who declined acting, Roman catholics were invested with that authority, and made judges of the doctrine and discipline of a protestant church. The proceedings of these commissioners soon manifested the design and object of their power. Dr. Compton, bishop of London, was suspended by this court, because he had not suspended Dr. Sharpe, who had incurred the king's displeasure, by preaching against the corruptions of popery. The next, who felt the tyranny of this ecclesiastical commission, were the new president and fellows of Magdalen college, in Oxford ; who likewise were suspended, and declared incapable of any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion, because they had opposed the king's mandate, appointing them to elect, as president, one Farmer, a man of bad character, and who had promised to declare himself a papist ; though such an election would have been a violation of the statutes of the founder, and involved them in the guilt of perjury.

But no measure of king James gave so great an alarm, as the imprisonment and trial of the seven bishops, who refused to read his second declaration for liberty of conscience ; which, besides proceeding with the former, on the ground of the royal power, to dispense with the laws, was drawn up in a higher strain, and chiefly included papists.<sup>1</sup> After this, no doubt could remain what were the designs of the king. In fact, a systematical scheme of despotism was formed,

<sup>1</sup> Welwood's Memoirs, p. 197—212.



and a model of government, for the direction of the king, was drawn up, and presented to him, by a jesuit. The great outlines of the plan were, to establish a council of reformation, to act on the principles of the inquisition—to subject the civil powers to the ecclesiastical—to appoint new modes of choosing parliaments, particularly by giving the bishop of the diocese a negative voice to set aside the election of a knight of the shire—to make it treason, when the Roman catholic faith was once settled, to propose a change of it—and to observe new methods in the leasing of lands, disposing of children, and ordering of servants—to keep low those who were so.<sup>1</sup>

This detail shews how nearly the ardour of king James, in the prosecution of his favourite projects, encouraged by the defeat of the duke of Monmouth, had precipitated the nation into ruin, and riveted on it the chains of popery and slavery. It shews the importance and necessity of the REVOLUTION effected by William III. “If James II. had gone on without control, words would not easily be able to express the miseries into which we should have fallen.” But the REVOLUTION disarmed *despotism*, and put *popery* to flight. In religion it gave toleration ; to our political constitution it secured freedom. It assigned to the prerogative of the crown its limits ; and it defined the rights of the people. It put the sceptre into the hand of the prince of Orange, as a *free gift* of the nation ; and it bound him, by the most sacred ties, to hold it as a *trust*. “To the *revolution* this nation owes a hundred years of liberty and prosperity ; and if we do not

<sup>1</sup> Gee's Jesuit's Memorial.

forget the "LORD which brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage," it may prolong the blessings to a hundred more."<sup>1</sup>

It was an event which diffused joy and gladness through the kingdom, and called forth the warmest expressions of gratitude to Providence. No town, no place, exceeded in ardour and gladness, on this occasion, the inhabitants of Taunton. Severely had they suffered under the rod of oppression. They flocked, in numbers, to the standard of the prince of Orange, and vied with their countrymen, in their generous exertions to support his throne. The estimate they delivered in of the value of their estates has entailed, as will be seen in another chapter, a *land-tax*, which is much higher than is paid in most parts of the kingdom. But, burthensome and unequal as it is, this very circumstance teaches an useful lesson: it should impress on the minds of the present, and future generations, a conviction of the great importance, in which their ancestors regarded the revolution. "The GLORIOUS REVOLUTION should be perpetually recalled to their remembrance, and the immortal decree of the convention parliament continually impressed upon their minds, as the great fundamental law of the constitution."<sup>2</sup>

With this illustrious æra, in the civil history of Great Britain, we close that of Taunton; only adding, that there has ever since been, in this town, a large party attached to the principles of the revolution; and that from this town there was sent up an address

<sup>1</sup> Sir Brooke Boothby's excellent Letter to Mr. Burke, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Brooke Boothby's Letter, p. 102.

(a copy of which is given below') from the justices of the peace and grand jury, animated with the spirit of

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset.* To the KING'S Most Excellent Majesty.

The humble Address of the Justices of the Peace, Grand Jury, and other Gentlemen, at the General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, held at *Taunton*, the 4th day of October, 1715.

*May it please your Majesty,*

Among all the seasonable promises and engagements of your faithful subjects, suffer us, of the county of *Somerset*, to approach you with assurances, that you have *there* also a people, as warmly devoted to your service, as the most zealous in all your dominions. It has, indeed, been our misfortune to be very ill represented in parliament; but we have still been untainted in our own breasts. We have been *overpowered*, but not *corrupted*. Suffer us then to make those professions of loyalty and affection to your majesty, and your august house, at this time, which the worst of times would never induce us to shrink from, or suppress. Your majesty will then bear with us, if the ardency of our affection prompts us to address you with too great a freedom. Pardon us, great sir, if we are so filled with the admiration of your royal virtues, as to forget our distance; and heaven will forgive us, if we admit of more than ordinary transports at those blessings you have brought us, or an unusual indignation against those base incendiaries, who themselves despise them, or would deprive us of them; *incendiaries* which the worst of ages has not paralleled; *traitors*, as far exceeding their brethren of the 5th of *November*, as the additional ingredients of HYPOCRISY, INGRATITUDE, and PERJURY, can make them.

Let them go on, invidiously, to disturb mankind, and fight against their Maker; let them shew their boasted *Loyalty* by *Rebellion*, and their *Religion* by *Perjury*; let them manifest their love to their native country, by conspiring to make it the prey and plunder of foreign armies; and let the world see their zeal for the *Church of England*, by the pretended head they labour to set over it. We question not, but, if they kindle the fire, themselves will be the sacrifice. If they will not quit their *inventions*, they shall *perish* in them. If they will not be *led*, they shall be *driven*, to repentance.

liberty, on the accession of George I. when in his person, "the present royal family *were called by the nation* to the throne of these kingdoms, to defend and support our religion, liberties, and laws."

If they will not taste your majesty's *Mercy*, they shall feel your *Justice*.

For our own parts, we satisfy ourselves that we have sufficiently proved our regard to our *constitution*, both in *Church and State*, by constantly adhering to those principles, which have placed them under the protection of your sacred majesty; and we cheerfully depend on the preservation of them, from the providence of a good God, and the vigilance and resolution of the best of kings. And we beg leave to declare to your majesty, and the whole world, that as the succession of your *Illustrious House* was ever dearer to us than our lives, so we will never fail to support and defend it at the expense of them; and that, as you have daily, and hourly, the prayers and endeavours, so you shall never want the treasure, or the blood, of

*Your Majesty's*

*Most Loyal and Obedient Subjects.*<sup>1</sup>

N. B. This was signed by all the justices, except one, and by every one of the grand jury.

<sup>1</sup> Communicated by Mr. Norris.

## CHAPTER VI.

HAMLETS IN THE PARISHES OF SAINT MARY MAGDALEN  
AND SAINT JAMES—HOLWAY—NORTH-TOWN—YARD-HOUSE  
FLOOK HOUSE—PYRLAND—PLAISTREET—ROWBARTON—  
OBRIDGE—PRIOR'S WOOD.

### HOLWAY.

**HOLWAY** is a small hamlet, in the parish of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalen, about a mile and a half south-east of the church.

‘On the 15th of May, 1821, as the servants of Downing Blake, esq. were ploughing a field, called the *Ten Acres*, at Holway, the plough struck against an urn, and broke off the top of it. It proved to contain a great number of Roman silver coins, some of the size of our shilling, and others of that of our sixpence, of the following emperors, namely, Constans, A. D. 337; Constantius II. 337; Julian II. 360; Jovian, 363; Valentinian I. 364; Valens, 364; Gratian, 367; Valentinian junior, 375; Theodosius, 379; *Magnus Maximus*, 383; *Victor*, 383; *Eugenius*, 392; Arcadius, 395; and Honorius, 395.

‘Near the urn were also found the remains of two human skeletons. The coins were in the finest state of preservation, and it is probable had been buried during the troublesome times that immediately followed the departure of the Roman legions from Britain, in the beginning of the fifth century. The most recent of them is one of the tenth year of Honorius, A. D. 406, bearing the mintmark of Constantinople. The

earliest is of the fifth year of Constans, A. D. 342, bearing the mintmark of Siscia, a town of Pannonia.

‘ The discovery of these coins proves that the Romans were in the immediate vicinity of Taunton, between the years 342 and 405, of the Christian æra; about which latter year, they were obliged to evacuate the British province, for the purpose of concentrating their forces, and defending Rome itself against the Goths.

‘ The coins, found at Holway, are of the same period as those mentioned in page 14 of this history to have been ploughed up at Lillesdon, in the parish of North-Curry, in 1748.

#### NORTH-TOWN.

‘ North-town is a hamlet in the parish of St. James, divided from Taunton by the river Tone, and connected with it by a stone bridge of two arches.

‘ The antiquity of this hamlet is expressed in the following traditional distich :—

“ Taunton was a furzy down,  
When Norton was a market town.”

‘ But nothing appears in history to warrant this assertion.

‘ There is an annual fair held here for three days, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of July. On the first day, the fair opens very early in the morning, with the sale of considerable quantities of garlick, from barges. To this succeeds the fair for all sorts of cattle and horses. The other two days are solely for pedlary and confectionary wares. The lord of the manor of Taunton-Dean, claims the profits of this fair; and in the rental of the hundred of Staplegrove, the yearly issues are set down at six shillings and eight-pence.

‘ Within the last fifty years, there was a cucking-stool at North-town, in the pool, on the south side of the road, for ducking disorderly and scolding women.

#### YARD-HOUSE.

‘ Yard-house is the residence of Miss Halliday, descended from an ancient family of that name, settled in Wiltshire. Yard, in the reign of Henry VIII. was the residence of the family of Hill.

#### FLOOK-HOUSE.

‘ Flook-house is the residence of William Metford, M. D. At this house John Trenchard, esq. M. P. for Taunton, resided, during the election of the year 1715, for the borough of Taunton, and here wrote several papers in the celebrated periodical publication of that day called “ The Independent Whig.”

#### PYRLAND.

Pyrland is a hamlet in the parish of Taunton St. James, and lies about two miles north-east of the church. It derives its name from the service, by which it was held, during the feudal times. When the tenants of manors had obtained favour of their lords to be under *certain* rents and services, their lands had names, which indicated the particular services they were to perform, and by those names they were entered in the rolls of the manor, for a perpetual remembrance of their tenure. *Ber-land* was the term for land, held by the service of bearing or carrying the lord’s or his steward’s provisions, or other things, in their removal from place to place, and the tenants of this land were called *Bermanni*.<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> Somner on Gavelkind, 118.—Gurdon’s Hist. of the Court-Leet, p. 579.

**PYRLAND-HOUSE**, in the beginning of the last century, was the residence of George Dean, esq. It is now the seat of the baronet family of YEA.

The highly-respectable family of YEA is descended from David Yea, of Sturminster-Marshall, in the county of Dorset, esq. who married Ursula, daughter of Edward Hobbes, of Brompton-Ralph and Stoke-Courcy, in the county of Somerset, esq. by whom he had issue one son,

David Yea, of Oakhampton and Brompton-Ralph, esq. who was high-sheriff of the county of Somerset in 1726. He married Dorothy, youngest daughter and co-heiress of William Lacy, of Hartrow and Elworthy, esq. and had issue one son, David, and three daughters, Mary and Jenny, who died unmarried, and Dorothy, who married first ——— Tate, esq. and secondly Francis Collins, of Wiveliscombe, esq.

David, only son of the said David Yea, esq. was one of his majesty's justices of the peace for this county. He married Joan, daughter and heiress of Nathaniel Brewer, of Tolland, esq. descended from the Brewers of Chard. They had issue four sons and five daughters, namely, David, the eldest, who died in December, 1758; 2. Thomas, who died unmarried; 3. William, who succeeded to the estate, *of whom presently*; and 4. Robert, who died in his infancy. The daughters were Mary, Dorothy, Jenny, Betty, and Sally.

William, the third and only surviving son of David Yea, esq. became the possessor of considerable estates in the several counties of Dorset, Devon, and Somerset, and fixed his residence at PYRLAND, which has since been the principal scat of the family. He was created a baronet on the 18th of June, 1759; served the office of high-sheriff for the county of Somerset in 1760; and was also one of his majesty's justices of the peace for the same county. He died the 18th of November, 1806, having married Julia, eldest daughter of sir George Trevelyan, of Nettlecombe, bart. (by Julia his wife, daughter of sir Walter Calverley, bart.) leaving issue a daughter, Julia, who died unmarried; and six sons, namely, 1. William-Walter, *of whom hereafter*; 2. Lacy, born December 14, 1757, and died 1758; 3. Lacy, born January 21, 1759, and died January 15,



have found them already affixed to the camps and the roads of the Romans, so they appear equally with the Britons to have used the name of *Chester* for the characteristic denomination of a Roman camp, and the name of *Street* for the characteristic appellation of a Roman road.

#### ROWBARTON.

This is a hamlet in the parish of Taunton St. James, about one mile north-east from the church, in the turnpike road leading to Kingston.

#### OBRIDGE.

Obridge is a hamlet in the parish of Taunton St. James, about one mile east from the church. Here was an ancient mill, held under the castle of Taunton, at the rent of six pounds, one shilling, and eight-pence. This mill has been destroyed by the improvements made in the navigation of the river Tone.

There was another mill between Obridge mill and the town called Fire-pool. The mill in Upper High-street bears the name of Pool-wall mill.

#### PRIOR'S WOOD.

Prior's Wood consists of a farm-house and lands, anciently a grange belonging to the priory of Taunton. It is now the property of John Halliday, of Chapel Cleeve, in the county of Somerset, esq.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE TOWN—THE MODERN  
IMPROVEMENTS AND POPULATION.

**T**HE spirit of improvement in buildings, and in the plan of towns, which has diffused itself through the kingdom, is, on the one hand, the consequence of the opulence, to which this country has attained, and, on the other, of the general increase and spread of knowledge, which has taken place of late years. In the infancy of our manufactures and commerce, the attention of the people was engaged by the active and parsimonious efforts of industry. Yet, in an early period of their trade, the inhabitants of Taunton appear to have carried their views to objects of convenience and ornament. For more than three hundred years back, a statute was passed, in the parliament of the 17th of Edward IV. for paving this town, as also the towns of Cirencester and Southampton.\*

Whatever alterations the buildings might have undergone, in the course of nearly three centuries, as the necessities, convenience, or taste of individuals would dictate, it does not appear, that any general change for accommodation or safety took place, till

\* Sir Robert Cotton's Abridgement of the Records in the Tower of London, 1657, p. 703. T.

within the last seventy years, when this town took a lead in that great modern improvement of turnpike roads, into which, as its original and great cause, may probably be traced, not only many other advantages, but a general civilization and refinement of manners, the spread of the same modes of dress and living, of the same taste and amusements, through the kingdom, in consequence of the frequent and easy communications, which turnpike roads have opened between the metropolis and all other towns, to the remotest extremities of the island.

Taunton was the first town in the west of England, that applied to parliament for a turnpike act. The bill was opposed by Humphrey Sydenham, esq. member for Exeter, who asserted, that the roads were in very good repair: it was supported by Thomas Prowse, esq. who put the house into a roar of laughter, by undertaking to prove, that the roads were in so bad a state, that it would be no more expense to make them *navigable*, than to make them fit for carriages.\* This contrast was easily reconciled, and the act passed in the 25th of George II. 1752. In the year 1765, the 5th of George III. a new act was procured, for amending, widening, and keeping in repair, several other roads, adjoining to the town, besides those included in the first statute. The continuance of these two acts

\* It may be proper to observe here, that the roads, in the neighbourhood of Taunton, were not only narrow, but deep in water. The floods were frequently so high, as to prevent persons from travelling; and some were, occasionally, drowned. In hard frosts, besides being obliged to lead their horses in their hands, it was necessary to break the ice with a strong staff, for nine miles out of ten.—*Locke's MS.*

was limited to the first of May, 1799 ; but the second had not been thirteen years in force, before the state of the roads rendered it expedient to apply to parliament for an enlargement of the terms of the former acts, and for some other powers, which were not included in them.

A third act, therefore, repealing the two preceding, was passed in the year 1778, the 18th of George III. This act changed the qualification of a trustee from the possession of, or title to, a personal estate of one thousand pounds value, into one of two thousand pounds, or an estate in land, in his own or his wife's right, of one hundred pounds clear yearly value, above reprisals, or being heir apparent to one of the clear yearly value of two hundred pounds. To the validity of the election of new trustees, it is enacted, that they shall be chosen by thirteen, or more, of the surviving trustees, and after twenty-one days public notice of the meeting for such an election. Except in this case, or that of the appointment of a collector of the tolls, on the death or removal of a former one, when two trustees may act ; or in that of borrowing money, when thirteen must be present ; seven are sufficient to carry the various powers of the act into execution. Among other clauses, peculiar to this act, was one, enacting the same toll at every gate, on a traveller passing through the town on the same day ; another authorizing the demand at every gate, on a Sunday, of the same toll as that payable on other days, and, over and above, a like toll, to be taken as a Sunday's toll. The application, to which it appropriated three-fourths of the Sunday's toll, constitutes a peculiar and important

object of the act; for it assigns such a proportion of the tolls, and the like proportion of the monies borrowed by virtue of it, to the repaving, repairing, and keeping in repair, the public footways, on the sides of East-street, Fore-street, North-street, and High-street.

In the 39th of George III. 1799, a fourth act was passed for altering, enlarging, and repealing some of the provisions of the act of the 18th George III. This act enabled the trustees to make turnpike the road leading from Tucker's-gate, in the parish of Lyng, to Piper's-inn, in the parish of Ashcott, and to erect toll-gates thereon; to alter the line of road leading from Shuttern-gate, over Blagdon-hill, to a place called White-wall or Trickey-warren, near Churchingford, and to stop up the road through Holway-lane, in the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalen, and to widen the road called New-cross-lane, from the Folly-gate house, on the Shoreditch road, to the said Holway-lane.

By this act, carriages employed in carrying lime for manure are exempted from toll, except carriages which have the fellies of the wheels of a less breadth than six inches. An additional half-toll is imposed on carriages conveying timber, between the first of November and the last day of February, in every year, except carriages drawn by one horse.

A fifth act for continuing and amending two acts of George III. for repairing certain roads leading from Taunton, was passed in 1817. This act continues the powers of the trustees of the said roads to the year 1838. All the roads, which were formerly comprised

in five districts, are declared to form only one trust. The trustees are empowered to make a carriage road from Henley's Barn, or Parsons' House, in the parish of Bishop's-Hull, to the village of Rumwell, in the same parish, and also from the village of Chilson, to the town of Wellington.

By this act, the tolls to be taken are limited as follows, namely, No more than one toll shall be taken on the same day, on the road leading from Taunton to Hartrow-gate, in the parish of Stogumber; also on the road from Langford-bridge, in Staplegrove, to Parish's Barn, in Milverton; also on the road from Taunton St. James, to the corner of Cole's Wall, in Broomfield; also from the smith's shop, in Rowbarton, to the direction-post, beyond Yard's Barn, in Broomfield; also from East-reach gate to Ashill-gate, and from Maddock's Tree, in Thorn-Falcon, to the Red Post, in Fivehead; also from the Quakers' Burying-place, in West-Monkton, to the Green Dragon, in Thurloxton, and from the Cross-ways, near the place where Walford-inn formerly stood, to Athelney-bridge; also from Shuttern-gate, in Taunton, to White Ball, in Sampford-Arundel, and from the said Shuttern-gate, over Blagdon-hill, to White Wall, near Churchingford; also from East-gate, in Taunton, to the pound, in Staple-Fitzpaine. And that no more than two tolls shall be taken on the same day, on the road from Tucker's-gate, in the parish of Lyng, to Piper's-inn, in Ashcott. This clause does not affect the Sunday's toll.

The trustees are empowered by this act to take down certain houses and buildings in Taunton, and other places, first making compensation for the same, in the

line of the roads within their trust, according to a schedule annexed ; but it shall not be lawful to take down the said houses after the expiration of sixteen years, from the commencement of this act, nor unless one year's notice shall be previously given.

The houses and buildings in Taunton referred to in the said schedule, to be taken down, are the *White Lion Inn*, situate in *East-street*, and the adjoining houses, in a straight line, as far as the house at the corner of *Tancred-street* ; the island formed by the *Swan Inn*, the smith's shop, and a dwelling-house the property of *Thomas Dinham*, in *East-street* ; the *Full Moon Inn*, and three other dwelling-houses, at the south-end of *High-street* ; and a sluice, situated in *Shuttern*, belonging to *Samuel Norman, esq.* The improvements in *East-street* are to be first made.

#### MARKET-HOUSE ACTS.

The next improvement of the town was effected by the first *market-house act*. The market was formerly held in the open streets, on a triangular spot of ground, in the centre of the town, which was called the *Island* and the *Cornhill*, surrounded on all sides by the *Fore-street*, and pointing northward to the *North-street*. On this spot stood the *guildhall*,<sup>1</sup> an assembly-room,

<sup>1</sup> Under the *guildhall* were two loathsome prisons, long and narrow rooms, admitting neither light nor air, but through a small grate in the door, and furnished with no one convenience, but a wooden platform, raised about three feet from the floor, on which those who were confined used to sleep on straw, or whatever else they could procure. A fire could not be made, nor any water obtained, but what the keeper brought, nor was there the least drain or outlet for any kind of filth. One of these wretched cells was named "*The Cow-house*," and the other "*Little Ease*." Seldom more

several rows of stalls and standings, and some old houses ; most, if not all, of which, to the number of fourteen, were occupied as public houses.

A spot of ground, so crowded with buildings, in the centre of the town, besides obstructing the free circulation of the air, could not but be attended with many inconveniencies and nuisances, by the filth lying in its narrow passages, and the receptacles for idleness and vice, which many of its buildings, from their situation, became. This ground afforded a site for a commodious market, and the taking down of the edifices and standings, with which it was covered, would leave an opening, at once salubrious and beautiful. In every view, the measure became an object of great utility. It, at last, effectually excited attention, and called forth the exertion of some sensible and public-spirited men of Taunton ; who, in 1763, formed themselves into an association, called " The Market-House Society." It was an avowed part of that plan to prevent the evils and drunkenness of a contested election, by engaging some gentlemen, inclined " to represent the borough, to devote, to this act of public and permanent utility, the sums, which had generally been lavished in largesses and feasts, to the voters of the time." The scheme was kept in view, and pursued, till circumstances favoured the execution. The vigorous and seasonable

than one person at a time was put into either, and these generally deserters or vagrants. So horrid and shocking were these receptacles, that confinement in them was dreaded beyond measure ; and some, overpowered chiefly by the horror of the place, had laid violent hands upon themselves, unable to endure their situation.—*Dr. Toulmin's MSS.*



interference of Mr. (afterwards sir Benjamin) Hammet urged and assisted the accomplishment of the plan. At the approach of the dissolution of parliament, in 1768, the lords Farnham and Thomond, who had canvassed the borough, afterwards relinquishing their views to the representation, the way was left open for the election of the two other candidates, without any opposition. A subscription of two thousand pounds, in the name of Nathaniel Webb, esq. one of these gentlemen, and the aid of both, in procuring an act of parliament for the purpose, gave actual existence to a capital improvement of the town, which had, for some years, been treated by many, as an idle chimæra, or an artful decoy, to weaken an opposite party.<sup>1</sup>

In 1768, the important and useful plan of the association received the sanction of the legislature, and an act passed for "erecting a market-house, and holding a market, in the town of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, and for preventing the holding of any market in the streets of the said town." These were the first and immediate objects of the act, but it comprehended other designs, conducive to the embellishment of the town, the accommodation of its inhabitants in general, and the benefit of the poor in particular.

<sup>1</sup> The idea of this improvement was first, incidentally, started at a convivial meeting; at which were present Mr. William Norris, Mr. Samuel Brooks, Mr. James Hare, and several more. On being made known, it met approbation; and the numbers, who entered into the design, increased weekly, till they amounted to near a hundred. But the ripening and execution of the scheme were, particularly, owing to the ingenuity, application, and exertions of Mr. James Foy. T.

The preamble to this act recites, that "the market of the town of Taunton is held in the open public streets, and that the removing of the same would be of great convenience to the inhabitants, and to all persons resorting thereto.

"That the lord bishop of Winchester, and James Foy, and John Shute, his portreeves, claim a property in the said market, but are willing to give up their right therein, upon satisfaction being made to them for the same.

"That there is a convenient spot of ground in the centre of the said town, commonly called *The Island* and *Cornhill*, the same being triangular, and situate in and surrounded on all sides by the Fore-street, and pointing northwards towards the North-street, on part whereof certain old houses, stalls, and standings, and a guildhall, are now standing; and if the said houses, standings, and guildhall were taken down and removed, a commodious and convenient market might be holden on the said ground; a market-house, part whereof might be appropriated and used as a town-hall, or guildhall, for the judges of assize, and for the justices of the peace for the county of Somerset, if they shall think proper to hold their assizes and sessions there, and for holding the meetings of the trustees appointed to execute this act, and for the steward of the bishop of Winchester, for the time being, to hold his courts, and other necessary and convenient houses and buildings, might be erected thereon, which would be a general advantage to the inhabitants of the town, and the surrounding country.

"That many disorders and irregularities are

frequently committed in the night-time in East-street, High-street, North-street, and Fore-street, in the said town, which, in a great measure, might be prevented, if the said streets were properly lighted.

“ That the cleansing the streets of the said town, and the taking down the signs and sign-posts, and the removing and preventing all annoyances and incroachments therein, would tend greatly to the health, safety, and advantage, as well of the inhabitants, as of all others resorting thereto.

“ And that the passage through North-street to the bridge, called North-town-bridge, is greatly obstructed by two old ruinous houses, now standing between *Groping-lane* and *Horse-lane*, and it would tend greatly to the convenience of the inhabitants and the public, if the said houses were taken down, and the ground whereon they stand were laid into the public street.

“ For carrying the purposes of this act into execution, it is therefore enacted,

“ That sir Thomas Dyke Acland, bart. “ and twenty-four other gentlemen, whose names are mentioned in the act,” and their successors to be elected in manner hereinafter mentioned, together with every man, who shall, on or before the 24th of June, 1760, advance and pay the sum of five guineas, as a free gift towards the purposes of this act, shall be, and are accordingly constituted and appointed, trustees, to carry this act into execution.

“ The trustees shall hold their meetings at the town-hall, as soon as the same shall be erected and fitted up, and, from and after that time, in no other place. Not

less than nine trustees are competent to transact any business, under this act, except to adjourn meetings, which may be done by two.

“ When the trustees shall be reduced by death, or otherwise, below sixty, new ones shall be elected; two-thirds of the whole number of whom shall at all times consist of inhabitants of Taunton, and one-third of gentlemen residing in the neighbourhood.

“ As soon as the trustees shall have set out the ground proper for holding the said market upon, it shall be lawful for them to purchase the said ground, and any buildings thereon, and convert the same into a place for holding the said market, and for erecting a market-house, part whereof shall be appropriated as a guildhall.

“ The trustees shall have and possess the right of holding the said market on the ground so set out, and receive and take the rents, tolls, and profits thereof; and shall direct at what hour in the morning the market shall be held, and at what hour in the evening it shall close, notice being given of the same by ringing a bell.

“ No person shall erect any stalls or standings, or hold any other market, in Taunton, or vend or expose to sale any corn, fish, meat, poultry, or other provisions, or any live cattle, within any of the public streets, or within one thousand yards from the bounds of the said market, within the county of Somerset, except such persons shall be licensed by two or more trustees, under the penalty of five pounds.

“ The trustees are empowered to purchase the said two houses standing between Groping-lane and Horse-lane, and pull down the same, and add the site to the street.

“ The trustees shall cause to be erected in East-street, High-street, North-street, and Fore-street, as many glass lamps as they shall think necessary.

“ They may borrow at legal, or less interest, the sum of four thousand pounds, to enable them to make the said purchases, and for the other purposes of this act, which sum shall be charged upon the rents and profits of the said market.

“ After the discharge of all debts and interest thereon, contracted by the trustees, in carrying this act into execution, the said market and buildings, and the rents, tolls, and profits thereof, shall be and remain in the said trustees, in trust, as an estate, for the use and benefit of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, in the said town of Taunton, for ever, and shall be applied to the cloathing, educating, and placing out apprentices, so many of the children of the poor inhabitants of the said parish, as the said trustees shall from time to time direct; and no person, whose child shall be so cloathed, educated, or apprenticed, shall be disqualified, on that account, from voting at any election for members to serve in parliament for the borough of Taunton.

“ The proportion, which the ground and buildings vested in the trustees by this act paid to the land-tax, church, and poor-rates, in 1768, shall continue to be paid, and the same shall be in lieu of all taxes, of what kind soever, in respect of the said market, and the buildings erected by virtue of this act.

“ The trustees may let the buildings, and tolls, upon lease, not exceeding seven years.

“ An annuity of one pound, four shillings, and eightpence shall be paid to the bishop of Winchester, and

his successors, as a full compensation for the right which the said bishop had in the old market. And an annuity of eighteen pounds shall be paid to the portreeves, as a full compensation for their right in the said old market.

“ The act appoints the mayor of Taunton to be clerk of the said market.’

“ The constables of the borough of Taunton, and their successors, shall enjoy the same authority and profits arising from weighing in the market, as they did in the old market before the passing of this act.

“ The trustees shall cause the streets and public passages in the said town to be cleansed and freed from all annoyances, obstructions, nuisances, and incroachments whatever.

“ If any person shall drive or place any carriage, or shall ride, lead, drive, or place any horse or beast, or shall drive any wheelbarrow, or shall run any wheel, or draw any sledge, upon the foot-pavement within the said town ; or shall throw or lay any ashes, dirt, or any filth or annoyance whatever, either upon the carriage or foot ways ; or shall suffer any swine to go at large in the said streets ; every person, offending in any of the cases aforesaid, shall, for every offence, forfeit ten shillings.

“ All actions, brought or prosecuted by or on behalf of the trustees, shall be brought and maintained in the name of the clerk for the time being to the said trustees.

“ Persons aggrieved by any thing done under this act may appeal to the general quarter-sessions of the county of Somerset.

‘ In consequence of the dissolution of the corporate body, there has not since been any clerk of the market.

“ No proceedings under this act shall be chargeable with any stamp duty.

“ Public notice of every meeting of the trustees, except the annual meeting on the 26th of December, shall be given in the parish church of St. Mary Magdalen, immediately after divine service, on the Sunday morning next before such meeting.”

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In the year 1817, a second act of parliament was obtained, “ for enlarging the market-place and regulating the market in the town of Taunton, and for better lighting, cleansing, and otherwise improving the said town, and for amending an act of the 8th and 9th of George III. relating thereto.”

The preamble recites the principal heads of the preceding act, and states that “ Whereas the trustees have set out and ascertained the bounds of the said market, agreeably to the directions of the said act ; but that the said market-place is now not sufficiently large for the purposes of the said market ; and that there are no suitable places appropriated for depositing the temporary stalls and standings ; and that it is expedient that provision should be made for enlarging the said market, and for lighting the several streets, and for making sewers and other works for better draining and improving the said town and places adjacent ; and that further tolls and authorities should be granted, for effecting the said purposes ;”

It is therefore enacted,

“ That it shall be lawful for the trustees to contract with any person who shall be willing to sell the same, for the purchase of any houses, gardens, and other

ground, within one thousand yards of the site of the present market, and, after purchasing the same, to appropriate a competent part thereof for enlarging the market for the sale of cattle and swine, and for any other purposes of the said market, and to use other parts thereof for depositing the temporary stalls and standings, when the same shall not be in use.

“ The trustees and their lessees may demand and receive, for and in respect of cattle and swine exposed to sale in the said market, the following tolls, namely,

“ For every horse, mule, ass, or beast, any sum not exceeding one shilling.

“ For every drove of calves, sheep, lambs, or swine, any sum not exceeding three shillings per score ; and so in proportion for a greater or less number.

“ The trustees may borrow, on mortgage of the tolls, any sum of money not exceeding ten thousand pounds.

“ All the powers contained in the act of the 8th and 9th of George III. for lighting the said streets, are extended, by this act, to all the other streets and avenues of the town and places adjacent.

“ The trustees shall not appoint the same person to be their clerk and treasurer.

“ The accounts to be open to the inspection of the trustees and creditors.”

Then follow certain clauses, directing the application of compensation for buildings, &c. purchased by the trustees.

It is then enacted, “ That it may be convenient that the said town and places adjacent, or some part thereof, should be lighted with gas ; and for the purpose of using carburetted hydrogen, or coal-gas, the trustees



are authorized to break up the pavement of any street, and sink trenches, and lay pipes, and put stop-cocks or plugs from such pipes, in such places as may be necessary. And drains may be made for carrying off the washings or waste that may arise in the prosecution of these works.

“ The trustees may be prosecuted for nuisances, or for any injury sustained by reason of any works or method of lighting by gas.

“ All persons, laying or repairing any pipes or plugs, shall with all reasonable despatch make good the pavement and carry away the rubbish, and in the mean time shall fence the place where any ground shall be opened, under the penalty of forty shillings for not complying with the same. And no pipes shall be laid without the consent of the trustees.

“ The funds of the said market shall not be applied in or for the making or providing any of the preparatory buildings or works, but such funds shall be applicable only to the annual expenses of lighting the said town with gas; and it shall be lawful for the trustees to raise, by contribution of such persons as shall be willing to advance the same, a fund not exceeding ten thousand pounds, for making and providing the necessary buildings and works for lighting the said town with gas, and to pay the profits arising therefrom, or any part or proportion thereof, amongst the several contributors.

“ For the more effectually cleansing the said town, the said trustees are empowered to make so many subterraneous drains and sewers, wells and pumps, of such dimensions, and in such manner, as they shall think proper, for carrying off the dirt and washings from the streets into the river Tone.”

## MARKET-HOUSE.

Under the provisions of the act of the 8th and 9th of George III. the necessary purchases having been made, and the old buildings pulled down, a new market-house, on a plan furnished by Coplestone Warre Bampfylde, esq. was erected, which was finished in 1772. This is an elegant building : the front looks to the north. The house, which is in the centre, is laid out into different apartments for the purposes of justice, amusement, and pleasure ; as the guildhall, a reading room, assembly room, card room, and billiard room. Two large wings, called arcades, accommodate the farmers and tradesmen who attend the markets, whilst the butchery or flesh-market is formed of moveable standings placed in rows on the area before the market-house. This area, which is open and spacious, is inclosed with posts and chains, and in the middle of it runs to the north a large pavement of broad flag stone, two hundred and sixteen feet in length, and eighteen feet in width, called **THE PARADE.**

On the first story, besides a commodious room for the card tables, there is a superb assembly room, fifty feet long, thirty feet wide, and twenty-four feet high, with a music gallery. This room is furnished with two elegant and large glass chandeliers, the gift of the late colonel Coxe, when representative for the county.

Opposite to the music gallery there is a full-length portrait of his late majesty, king George III. in the robes of the garter, painted while he was prince of Wales. This picture was presented to the trustees by the late sir Benjamin Hammet.

## NEW MARKET-HOUSE.

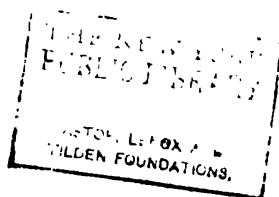
An elegant building has been erected on the west side of the Parade, under the provisions of the act of the 57th of George III. for the purpose of affording additional accommodations to the increased business of the market.

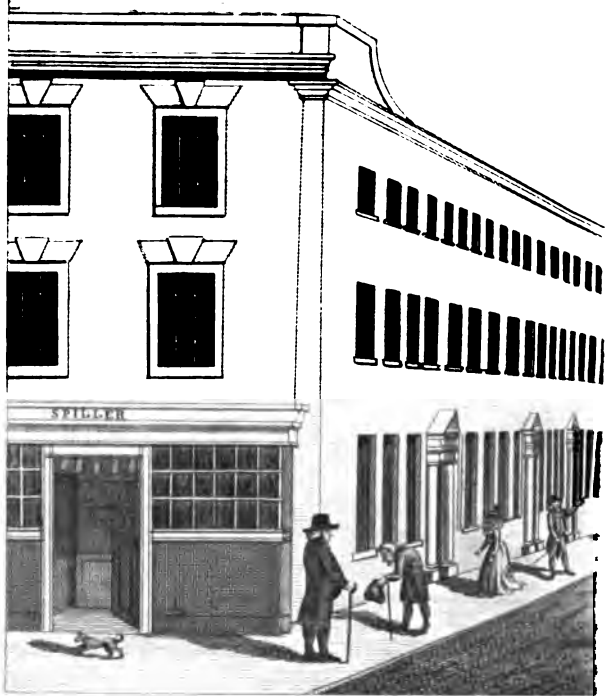
The first stone was laid with masonic honours, on Wednesday, the 28th day of February, 1821, by Charles Kemys Kemys Tynte, esq. provincial grand master for the county of Somerset.

As soon as this building shall be finished, the trustees will appropriate its several parts to the specific purposes for which it is intended. It has been erected on the sites of several old and ruinous houses which deformed that part of the town, and which had been built there after the memorable siege of Taunton, in 1645.

This edifice was erected according to a plan given by Mr. William Burgess, of Exeter, and has been executed under his superintendance, by Mr. Thomas Norman, of Taunton, builder.

The improvements which have been made in the town, under the two market-house acts, are so commodious and beautiful, so pleasing to the eye and so conducive to health, so agreeable and useful in point of convenience to the inhabitants, and so captivating to the traveller, that posterity must hold in grateful respect the taste which designed them, and the public spirit from which they originated. The effects of these improvements have been visible not only on the spot where they immediately took place, but also through the whole town; in every part of which, new, regular,





A VIEW OF THE

*This plate is inscribed, by permission*

handsome buildings have risen up. The most material change, in point both of convenience and appearance, was produced by carrying into execution part of the turnpike act of 1778 which related to paving the streets. In this business the late sir Benjamin Hammet, then a resident in the town, took the lead, in 1779, and by his activity and perseverance procured a specimen, in High-street, of the advantages which would be derived from carrying the new pavement through every street; which has been since done in a style superior indeed to the first specimen, and Taunton is now among the best paved towns in the kingdom.

#### HAMMET-STREET.

A considerable alteration in the state of a principal part of the town, at once highly commodious and ornamental, was effected by the operation of an act which sir Benjamin Hammet was the means of carrying through parliament in the year 1788. This act enabled that gentleman to purchase and take down two houses in Fore-street, one in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Locke, the other then empty, but lately in the occupation of Mr. William Pring, with several other houses and buildings; and on the site of them to lay out and open a passage in a direct line to St. Mary Magdalen's church, not less than thirty-six feet wide, and to erect houses and buildings. Before this, the curious and elegant tower of St. Mary Magdalen's church was almost hid from view by buildings; the access to the church was through a narrow lane, which did not permit a carriage to pass without incommoding and endangering a foot passenger;

and opposite the great entrance of the church stood an old ruinous alms-house. Sir Benjamin Hammet, under the sanction of this act, at his own cost and risk, opened a spacious avenue to the church, and built a street, called "Hammet-street," of handsome houses, terminating in a large area before the west front, and exhibiting the fine tower in its beautiful proportions to the full view of the spectator from the Parade. The accommodation to the public by this alteration is great, and the effect produced does honour to the taste that designed it. The town, by these improvements, now affords, what for many years it wanted, houses for the reception of genteel families out of trade; and many circumstances invite the residence of such in Taunton, particularly its situation in one of the richest and most beautiful vales in the kingdom, its well furnished markets, and the genteel and well-informed society which inhabit it.

#### CRESCENT.

This is a range of elegant houses, calculated for the residence of genteel families, situated in Paul's-field, on the south-west side of the town. The first stone of these buildings was laid by William Kinglake, esq. in the year 1807. At the south corner, the catholics have recently erected a chapel in the Ionic order of architecture, which, when finished, will be a most elegant structure. The field in front of the Crescent is now laying out in gravel walks, and a plantation of flowering shrubs and evergreens is about to be formed.

The plan of the Crescent embraces, as a future object, a street to communicate with High-street.

## THE GUILDHALL.

The guildhall is a room on the ground floor of the market-house, properly fitted up for the purpose, where the magistrates, acting for the hundred of Taunton-Dean, sit every Wednesday and Saturday at twelve o'clock, for hearing and determining all matters brought before them.

This room is also appropriated to the use of public meetings convened by the magistrates, or the bailiffs of the borough. The lord of the manor's courts-leet are also held in it, and the trustees of the market hold their meetings here.

## ASSIZES AND SESSIONS.

The Lent assizes for the county of Somerset are always held in the assize-hall, in the Castle-green, part of the ancient Castle of Taunton; as is the court of general quarter sessions for the county, at Michaelmas in every year.

The Summer assizes are held, in alternate years, at Wells and Bridgwater. The Epiphany and Easter sessions are held at Wells, and the Midsummer sessions at Bridgwater.

## PRISONS.

There is a large county Bridewell at Wilton, calculated for the confinement of about eighty prisoners, charged with felonies, misdemeanours, or a breach of the peace. No debtors are confined here. This gaol was erected in the year 1754, and rebuilt and greatly enlarged in 1815.

There is a small inconvenient prison near St. Mary Magdalen's church, called "The Nook," where refractory and disorderly persons are secured by the constables until they can be brought before a magistrate.



## MARKETS AND FAIRS.

The principal market is on Saturday. It is well supplied with fish from both the north and south channels, and plentifully stored with poultry and all kinds of provisions, of the quality so rich a vale as that of Taunton may be expected to produce.

Another market, chiefly for fish, butchers' meat, vegetables, and fruit, is held every Wednesday. The produce of the rich and extensive gardens near the town, and the flesh of the cattle fattened in the surrounding pastures, are exposed to sale almost every day in the week. But it is a singular circumstance that there is not one butcher's shop in the town, all the meat being sold from moveable standings.

The tolls of the markets are farmed at one thousand, three hundred, and seventy-four pounds per annum, which may serve to give the reader an idea of their importance, and of the quantity of provisions sold in them. In 1785, the tolls were let at six hundred pounds per annum, and in 1813, at nine hundred and forty-two pounds.

There is a market called "The Great Market," held on the first Saturday in every month, in Eastreach, for sheep and cattle. This market commenced in November, 1789, and is well attended.

There is an annual fair held in the middle of the town, on the 17th of June, for horses and all sorts of cattle. The tolls belong to the lord of the manor.

## BANKS.

There are two banking-houses in Taunton. The first was established in 1790, under the firm of sir Benjamin Hammet, Jeffries, Woodforde, and Buncombe, which is now (1822) continued under the firm of Woodforde,

Kinglake, Woodforde, and Poole, who draw on Esdaile and Co. in Lombard-street, London.

The other bank was established in 1800, under the firm of John and Isaac Badcock, and is now (1822) continued under the firm of John and Daniel Badcock, who draw upon Ransom and Co. in Pallmall, London.

The hours of business are from ten to three, and on Saturdays, from ten to four.

#### SAVINGS-BANK.

The West Somerset Savings-bank was established at Taunton, the 6th of September, 1817, by the exertions and influence of sir Thomas B. Lethbridge, bart. of Sandhill-Park, and other gentlemen. This institution has been found, in common with others of the same description, to have excited a spirit of economy, independence, and industry, amongst those classes of persons in society who are disposed to avail themselves of the advantages to be derived from it. The number of depositors, from its commencement, to the 6th of September, 1821, were two thousand, six hundred, and fifty-three; and the sums deposited, with the interest thereon during the same period, amounted to eighty-nine thousand, eight hundred, and ninety-seven pounds, twelve shillings, and eight-pence.

The office is in North-street. The actuary is Mr. Sacheverel Harwood.

#### ANNUITANT SOCIETY.

In the year 1765, the late Dr. Toulmin brought forward the plan of an annuitant society, for the benefit of the widows of subscribers, in which he was seconded and assisted by major-general Roberts. The scheme met with some difficulties, but through the

exertions of several gentlemen of the town, and of others at Bridgwater and in the neighbourhood, it was finally adopted and carried into execution, and the society has existed ever since.

On the 6th of October, 1790, its capital stock amounted to two hundred and fifty pounds in the security of the Taunton turnpikes, and to five thousand pounds in the three per cent. annuities, besides three hundred and seventy-five pounds in dividends then due. Its funds and annual subscriptions then paid fifteen annuitants at twenty pounds each, and one at ten pounds, in proportion to the number of years the husbands of the annuitants had respectively subscribed.

On the 26th of September, 1821, there were only thirty-six subscribers to this society, at two pounds seven shillings each, annually. Its stock then amounted to two hundred and fifty pounds in the security of the Taunton turnpikes, and to four thousand four hundred pounds in the three per cent. annuities, besides one hundred and sixty-three pounds, ten shillings, in the hands of the treasurer. The interest of this stock, and the annual subscriptions, paid fifteen annuitants at only eleven pounds each; three at eight pounds, five shillings, each; and four at five pounds, ten shillings, each.

This society originally consisted of one hundred persons, and much interest was required to become a member on any vacancy; but the plan being calculated from the tables of Dr. Price on lives in London, which proved erroneous when applied to lives in the country, the annual subscriptions were consequently found to be inadequate to the payment of the

widows' annuities; which being continually lessened, the number of members also gradually decreased, till at length it was resolved to admit no more into the society. It is now become a mere tontine, for the benefit of those who may be living at any period when it shall be unanimously agreed to divide the capital stock, which by their present articles cannot be diminished.

#### POST-OFFICE.

The post-office is in North-street, opposite to the Castle Inn. The mail from London, by way of Bath, Wells, Glastonbury, and Bridgwater, arrives at Taunton about three o'clock in the afternoon, and proceeds, through Wellington and Collumpton, to Exeter. It returns in the morning at half-past nine, and sets off from Taunton to London, at ten o'clock. Letters for London, and all places eastward of Taunton, should be in the office before eight in the morning; and for Exeter, and all places westward of Taunton, by two in the afternoon. The post-mistress is Miss Sarah Daw.

#### TAUNTON AND SOMERSET HOSPITAL.

Since the account of the hospital was printed at page 207, the committee for conducting the affairs of this institution, in order to testify their personal and official estimation of the treasurer, Dr. Blake, requested him to sit for his portrait. An animated and faithful picture of that gentleman was accordingly painted by Mr. Ponsford, an artist then in Taunton, which has since been placed in the committee room, as a grateful memorial of Dr. Blake's undeviating solicitude to advance the character and prosperity of the hospital.

A complete electrical apparatus was lately presented to the institution by Dr. Blake.

From the annual report it appears, that, since the

hospital was opened, to the 25th of October, 1821,  
there have been admitted - - - - 1556 patients;

Of whom were cured, - - - 888

Relieved, - - - - - 290

Made out-patients, - - - 181

Discharged by desire, - - - 27

For misconduct, - - - - 15

Incurable, - - - - - 38

Not benefited, - - - - 50

Died, - - - - - 44

In the hospital Oct. 25th, 1821, 23

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Total, - - - - - 1556

There have been 8025 out-patients admitted during  
the same period.

The expenses of this establishment for the year  
ending the 25th of October, 1821, amounted to eight  
hundred and fifty-four pounds, seven shillings, and  
eight-pence.\*

#### EYE INFIRMARY.

An infirmary for diseases of the eye was instituted  
in the year 1816, and is supported in some measure  
by voluntary subscriptions; but much more by the  
unceasing exertions of its founder, Mr. James Billett,  
surgeon and oculist, in North-street. The number of  
patients admitted from March the first, 1816, when

\* In 1789, the late Dr. Cox opened a *Dispensary* for the relief  
of the indigent sick, at his own expense; and continued to support the  
same with medicine and attendance, until August, 1793, with but  
very little assistance, in conjunction with Mr. Trott, as apothecary  
and surgeon. Finding his circumstances inadequate to the support  
of such an establishment, he was obliged reluctantly to discontinue  
it. About six hundred patients received medical assistance from this  
institution. Dr. Cox died at Taunton, in the autumn of 1796.

the infirmary was first opened, to March the first, 1821,

was - - - - - 1034

Of whom were cured, - - 782

Benefited, - - - - 169

Incurable, - - - - 53

Remain on the books, - - 30

#### LUNATIC ASYLUM.

In the year 1820, was opened, in the immediate vicinity of this town, by Messrs. Nehemiah and James Duck, surgeons, a large and respectable asylum for the care and cure of persons labouring under mental derangement, named "The Taunton Lunatic Asylum," upon the plan of the York Retreat, (the benefits of which are confined to members of the Society of Friends,) so justly celebrated for its mild and humane treatment of the patients confined there. In the management, adopted by Messrs. Duck, of those persons who are placed under their care, they have entirely exploded the unnecessary coercive measures and corporeal punishments too well known to have been practised in some lunatic asylums, and substituted a system of kindness and attention to the comforts of the patients, with such medical assistance as the various symptoms of their disease may require, as being more congenial to the dictates of reason and humanity. One of the proprietors resides in the house to superintend its management. Suitable accommodations are provided for patients in every class of life. The situation is extremely healthy and pleasant, being dry, and commanding fine views of the surrounding country, so that this institution altogether forms a very desirable residence for its unfortunate inmates.

**TAUNTON MEDICAL SOCIETY.**

This society was instituted on the 22d of July, 1807, for the several purposes of promoting useful knowledge, by the circulation of books, for encouraging a free communication of professional intelligence, and for maintaining a spirit of social intercourse among its members. The society holds two general meetings in every year, namely, on the Wednesday preceding the full-moon, in the months of April and September. It consists of ordinary and honorary members, and is under the official management of a president and treasurer. Every member pays two guineas on his admission into the society, and one guinea annually.

This society was originally composed of the members of the Taunton district of the Western Medical Society, established at Sherborne, in June, 1806, and the members of the Sherborne, Blandford, and Wells Medical Societies are honorary members of this society.

The library, consisting of upwards of three hundred volumes, is kept at the hospital.

**READING ROOMS AND LIBRARIES.**

There are three reading rooms and two circulating libraries in Taunton. The oldest reading room is that at the Market-house, which is supplied with four London daily papers, and four provincial weekly ones.

Savage's reading room and library, in High-street, has upon the table four London daily papers, nine provincial weekly papers, and the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons, during the session of parliament.

Smyth's reading room and library, in Fore-street, is supplied with three London daily papers, and seven provincial weekly papers.

In the year 1766, when the first reading society was formed in Taunton, it was found difficult to meet with twelve gentlemen, disposed to form such a literary association. This society still exists, and is in a flourishing state. It is confined to twenty-five members resident in Taunton, or within six miles of it. Each member pays one guinea on being elected, and one guinea annually; and he may order any book, on condition of taking it, when the society have done with it, at half the original price, if it will not sell for more, and at two thirds, if the price should exceed one guinea.

A second reading society was formed a few years since, upon a plan similar to that above-mentioned. This consists of twenty-four members, who each pay two guineas and a half on their admission, and half a guinea annually. Every member is allowed to order what books he thinks proper, on condition that he takes every such book at one third of the original price, if it does not exceed seven shillings and six-pence; at one half, if it does not exceed two guineas; and at two thirds for all books, above two guineas in price, if they do not sell for more.

In 1790, there were four book societies in this town, one of which, being then recently established, was confined to ladies. The latter has been, for some years, discontinued.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

On the 13th of March, 1788, a society was formed for the institution of Sunday schools in this town, which met with a ready and generous support. It included, in its benevolent operation, the instruction of two hundred children. But while it was a business of



some time to engage the whole town in this useful design, a private person, Mr. Harris, a gardener, in North-town, singly led the way, in this good work. Surrounded by a number of poor children, in the extremity of the town, where he lived, he became himself their instructor, conducted them to public worship, and, without gratuity, took upon himself the care of them, which, in the same free manner, he continued for three years.

‘ In 1822, there are six Sunday schools in Taunton :

1. The boys’ charity-school, in Middle-street, the scholars of which attend divine worship in St. Mary Magdalen’s church.

2. The girls’ charity-school, who also attend St. Mary Magdalen’s church.

3. The Sunday school, attached to the Madras school, in Holway-lane; the scholars belonging to which, amounting to about one hundred and twenty, attend divine service in St. James’s church.

4. The Sunday school, attached to Paul’s meeting, in Paul-street.

5. The Sunday school, attached to the Wesleyan methodists’ chapel, in Upper High-street.

6. The Sunday school, attached to the Calvinistic baptists’ chapel, in Silver-street.

#### NEWSPAPER.

‘ The Taunton Courier is published at the printing-office, in East-street, every Wednesday afternoon, by Mr. J. W. Marriott. This paper commenced on the 22d of September, 1808, and is circulated through the counties of Somerset, Devon, and Dorset.

## PITT CLUB.

'A club for the celebration of the birth-day of the right honourable William Pitt, and of the political system pursued by that minister, in conducting the domestic and foreign relations of the government of Great Britain, was instituted at Taunton, in the year 1815, and called the Somerset and Taunton Pitt Club. The number of members is about one hundred. The anniversary meeting is on the 28th of May.'

## MASONIC LODGE.

'The lodge of Unanimity and Sincerity, No. 497, was instituted at Ilminster, in 1788, and removed thence to Taunton, on the 18th of September, 1797. The number of members is about sixty. In 1818, a warrant was issued from the grand chapter of royal arch masons, of which the duke of Sussex is the principal, to enable the brethren of this lodge to assemble in that degree of masonry. The lodge is at Willie's London Inn. The officers for 1822 are James Billett, W. M. Francis Townsend, P. M. Hugh Norris, S. W. Samuel Melhuish, J. W. James Bale, treasurer; Thomas Lake, secretary.

'In 1789, some gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood, influenced by patriotic principles, formed themselves into an association, to celebrate annually, on the 4th of November, the glorious revolution of 1688; as an event, to which, under God, this country owes its deliverance from popery and arbitrary power; and to avow themselves, in the most explicit manner, advocates for the pure and genuine principles of civil and religious liberty. At the next meeting, on November 4th, 1790, their numbers were increased, and it was then agreed to hold an annual meeting, on the 14th of July, in commemoration of the revolution in France, and the capture of the Bastile. T.

This society has ceased to exist for many years.

## THEATRE.

‘ The theatre is situated in Silver-street, and is the property of Mr. Henry Lee, the manager. It was built in 1799, and opened on Thursday evening, the 27th of March, 1800, with the comedy of “ The Heir at Law,” and the farce of “ The Rival Soldiers.” The season commences in the assize week, and continues for about two months. The company is respectable, and the manager exerts his best talents in the representation of standard dramatic pieces, and in getting up a *suite* of theatrical novelties, for the purpose of enlivening and gratifying his patrons.

## BILLIARD ROOMS.

‘ There are two billiard rooms in Taunton, one in an upper room at the Market-house, and the other in the Castle-green. A third is building at the London Inn.

## LAMPS.

‘ The town is lighted with lamps during the winter half-year, the expense of which is defrayed out of the tolls of the market.

‘ A company was instituted, in the autumn of 1821, for the purpose of lighting the town with coal-gas, under the provisions of an act, passed in the 57th year of his late majesty.

‘ The company proposes to commence its operations in the autumn of the present year.

## BARRACKS.

‘ On the south-side of the town, adjoining to Mount fields, are barracks for a troop of cavalry, and apartments for the officers. These buildings were erected in the year 1796.

POPULATION.

The preceding pages of this chapter have presented an agreeable view of the modern improvements, giving to the present state of the town, in many instances of embellishment, convenience, and utility, advantages above what its inhabitants formerly enjoyed. We must now touch on a point in which it has evidently declined from its former state, and that is its POPULATION.

When the poll-tax was laid on by William III. in 1689, the inhabitants of Taunton amounted to upwards of twenty thousand persons. This calculation has been adopted and transmitted, ever since, by one writer after another. In the succeeding reign of queen Anne, this was called her "nursery for soldiers." But modern authors have committed a great error, by following the estimate at which the number of the people was fixed in those periods. The numbers admitted to poll, at different elections, do not appear to have, even then, borne that proportion to the whole, which such a state of population would produce. For,

In 1695 there were polled	- - -	533
1698	- - - - -	577
1700	- - - - -	553
1702	- - - - -	565
1710	- - - - -	975
1714	- - - - -	1017

The unsuccessful candidates, at this last election, alleged, that this great number was formed by the illegal conduct of the mayor; for the poll, in time past, had usually consisted only of six hundred; and, by a narrow scrutiny made into the whole parish of

St. Mary Magdalen, by the surveyors of the highways, it appeared that there were not one thousand house-keepers in the whole extent of it; nor full seven hundred within the borough. Allowing five persons to every family, the number of inhabitants in the parish of St. Mary Magdalen could not, at that time, be reckoned more than five thousand. If another five thousand be added for the suburbs, which, then, lay mostly in St. James's parish, the total will still fall very short of the number assigned to the year 1689.

There can be no doubt that since the year 1715, the town has greatly decreased in the number of inhabitants, and that very many houses, in the suburbs, are levelled to the ground. In 1790, the late Dr. Toulmin ascertained the state of its population, by going from house to house; and the following particulars give the result of his enquiries, on the particular heads, into which, to make his calculations minute and full, he judged it expedient to throw them. He extended his scrutiny into the parishes of Wilton and Bishop's-Hull, only confining himself within the turnpike-gates, or to the contiguity of houses, except wherever the borough reaches beyond the gate leading to Pitminster. He found the number of houses, exclusive of Gray's, Huish's, Henley's, and Pope's alms-houses, to amount to

- - - - -	1118
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Houses uninhabited, including the unfinished dwellings in Hammet-street,	- 47
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Families,	- 1199
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Males, - 2384	}	Souls in all, - 5472
Females, 3088	}	

Married persons, - - - - -	1181
Widowers, - - - - -	106
Widows, - - - - -	280
Under 15 years of age, - - -	1695
Above 50 and not 70 years old,	797
Above 70, - - - - -	258
Above 80 and under 90, - -	69
Above 90 and under 100, - -	11
At 100, - - - - -	1
At 102, - - - - -	1

The number of persons in Taunton above fifty years of age, being more than one sixth of the whole number of inhabitants, especially if added to the number of those who have reached beyond seventy, must be allowed to speak in favour of the salubrity of its air, and prove, that its decrease, in respect of population, should not be ascribed to epidemical diseases, or an unwholesome situation, but to the emigration of the labouring class, under the notion of bettering their condition in some other place.

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‘ From the returns made to the House of Commons in 1801, it appears that the population of Taunton stood thus:—

Houses inhabited, - - - - -	1146
— not inhabited, - - - - -	48
Families, - - - - -	1308
Males, - 2450 } Souls in all, -	5794
Females, 3344 }	
Increase from 1790 to 1801, -	322

‘ According to the returns made in the year 1811,  
the number of persons amounted to - - 6993

Increase from 1801 to 1811, - - - 1199

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‘ In 1821, the numbers were

Houses inhabited, - - - - - 1503

—— building, - - - - - 27

—— not inhabited, - - - - - 46

Families, - - - - - 1714

Families chiefly employed in agriculture, 197

—— in trade, - 1297

Other families, - - - - - 220

Males, - 3742 } Souls in all, - - 8539

Females, 4797 }

Increase from 1811 to 1821, - - - 1546

Increase from 1790 to 1821, - - - 3067

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‘ *Comparative View of the Population of Taunton.*

	1790	1801	1811	1821
Houses inhabited, - -	1118	1146	1306	1503
—— building, - -				27
—— not inhabited, -	47	48		46
Families, - - - - -	1199	1308	1441	1714
Persons, - - - - -	5472	5794	6993	8539
Males, - - - - -	2384	2450	3036	3742
Females, - - - - -	3088	3344	3957	4797

#### LAND-TAX.

We must not close the History of Taunton, without noticing the proportion it pays to the land-tax. Here, as it has been observed in a former chapter, its zeal for the revolution entailed on it a heavy burden; for

it pays a greater sum than the town of Bridgwater, and the cities of Bath and Wells, together, which are three of the most ancient and capital towns in the county, and the first of those cities has amazingly increased in extent, number of buildings, and population. The land tax, at four shillings in the pound, produces at

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Bath, - - -	443	6	0	Taunton borough,	726	3	0
Wells, - - -	480	17	6	Holway tithing, -	286	15	0
Bridgwater & Hay-				Taunton St. James			
grove tithing, -	366	5	0	town-side, - -	215	5	10
				Ditto land-side, -	262	13	0
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	1,290	8	6	Paid by Taunton,	1,490	16	10

#### COUNTY-RATE.

In the year 1742, in pursuance of the statute of the 12th of George II. and by an order of the court of quarter-sessions, held at Taunton, when one hundred pounds should be raised by a county-rate, the proportion of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen to that sum was nine shillings and six-pence, and that of the parish of St. James two shillings and six-pence farthing.

‘ In the year 1818, a committee of magistrates was appointed at the court of quarter-sessions, to take into consideration the assessments to the property-tax, under schedule A, and to report their opinion “ whether the same does not afford the most convenient basis for establishing a fair and equal county-rate.”

‘ The committee accordingly reported, “ that the present county-rate is most unequal and most partial, and therefore most unjust and oppressive.

“ That the gross inequality of the county-rate calls loudly for the interference of the court, and for the



hundred and thirty-six passengers carried by forty horses ; whereas, were it not for these coaches, at least five hundred horses would be required to perform this work.

“ These coaches and caravans hinder the consumption of all sorts of provisions for man and beast, thereby bringing down the rents of lands. For instance, a coach with four horses carries six passengers, a caravan with four or five horses carries twenty or twenty-five. These, when they come to their inn, club together for a dish or two of meat, and, having no servants with them, spend not above twelve-pence or sixteen-pence a-piece at a place ; yet perhaps use four, five, or six pair of sheets. Horses they have none, but what draw them ; and for those, the coachmen agree with the innkeeper beforehand, to have their hay and oats at so low a rate, that he loseth by them, and is forced to beat down the price of them in the market, yet must let the coachman have them for what he pleaseth, otherwise he carries his passengers to other inns ; by which means the innholders get little or nothing, cannot pay their rent, nor hold their inns, without great abatement. Two third parts of what they formerly paid is, in some places, abated. Upon such accounts as these, innholders, where these coaches do come, are undone ; and if so, since most travellers travel in coaches, what must become of all the rest of the inns on the roads where these coaches stay not ? Believe it, they are a considerable number, take all the grand roads in England, as York, Exeter, Chester, &c. There are about five hundred inns on each road, and these coaches do not call at fifteen or sixteen of them : then what must follow, but that the rest be undone, and their landlords lose their rents ?

“ If the gentlemen, the tradesmen, the husbandmen, the graziers, be not benefited by this travelling, I am sure the last sort of travellers, to wit, the poor, they cannot be profited thereby ; for waggons, or the long coaches first invented, and still in use, would be most for their interest to travel in, being far less expensive than the other : so that these running coaches are not most beneficial to every sort of travellers. Men do not travel in these coaches with less expense of money or time, than on horseback ; for on horseback they may travel faster ; and if they please, all things duly considered, with as little, if not less charges.

“ For instance, from London to Exeter, Chester, or York, you

pay forty shillings a-piece in summer-time, forty-five shillings in winter, for your passage ; and as much from those places back to London ; besides in the journey they change coachmen four times ; and there are few passengers but give twelve-pence to each coachman at the end of his stage, which comes to eight shillings in the journey backward and forward, and at least three shillings comes to each passenger's share, to pay for the coachman's drink on the road : so that in summer-time the passage backward and forward to any of these places costs four pounds eleven shillings, in the winter five pounds one shilling, and this only for eight days' riding in the summer, and twelve in the winter. Then, when the passengers come to London, they must have lodgings, which perhaps may cost them five or six shillings a week, and that in fourteen days amounts unto ten or twelve shillings, which makes the four pounds eleven shillings either five pounds one shilling, or five pounds three shillings ; or the five pounds one shilling five pounds eleven shillings, or five pounds thirteen shillings ; besides the inconveniency of having meat from the cooks, at double the price they might have it for in inns. But if stage-coaches were down, and men travelled again, as formerly, on horseback ; then, when they came into their inns, they would pay nothing for lodgings ; and as there would excellent horses be bred and kept by gentlemen for their own use, so would there be by others that would keep them on purpose to let, which would, as formerly, be let at ten or twelve shillings per week, and in many places for six, eight, or nine shillings per week : but admitting the lowest price to be twelve shillings, if a man comes from York, Exeter, or Chester, to London, be five days coming, five days going, and stay twelve days in London to despatch his business, (which is the most that country chapmen usually do stay,) all this would be but three weeks ; so that his horse-hire would come but to one pound sixteen shillings ; his horse-meat at fourteen-pence per day, one with another, which is the highest that can be reckoned upon, would come but to one pound five shillings ; in all three pounds one shilling : so that there would be, at least, forty or fifty shillings saved of what coach-hire and lodgings will cost him.

“ From Northampton men pay for passage in coach to London sixteen shillings, and so much back ; from Bristol twenty-five shillings ; from Bath twenty shillings ; from Salisbury twenty shillings,

or twenty-five shillings; from Reading seven shillings; the like sums back; and so in proportion for longer or shorter stages. Judge then whether men may not hire horses cheaper than five shillings a day. I am sure they may for half the money, especially if coaches were down, that men might receive encouragement.

“It is the case but of very few, that the suppressing of them would hurt; for if all stage-coaches were to be suppressed, I dare say five to one of those that keep them would receive advantage thereby, as clearly will be evinced, if it be considered, that, when this business was before his majesty in council, where it depends undetermined, none of the stages opposed the being put down, except Exeter, Salisbury, Dorchester, Bristol, Southampton, Dover, Norwich, Lincoln, York, West-Chester, Worcester, and Shrewsbury, who call themselves Stage-coachmen upon the grand roads of England; and there is not one owner of any of these coaches, but hath other ways to live, if he were prohibited driving them; for they are all of them either innholders, or coach or harness-makers, following those trades, or carriers, or licensed coachmen in London; and may live as well as the hackney coachmen in London. The other stage-coaches are all, or most of them, kept either by innholders first, who (one in a town) did set up a coach, and so carried all the guests to his own house. Then a second sets up another, and so a third and fourth in a town; which done, they run one against another, purposely to get the guests from each others houses; whereby they not only destroy multitudes of horses, but are great losers themselves; so that themselves would be thankful to have them put down, and yet are forced to keep them up, till there shall be a general suppression, because they shall otherwise lose their whole trades.”

‘The following is the present state (1822) of the coaches which run to and from Taunton:—

*London.*

The *Royal Mail* coach arrives from London, in 19 hours, by way of Bath, every afternoon at three; proceeds to Exeter; and returns every morning at half past nine. The coach office is at the *London Inn*.

The *North Devon Telegraph* arrives from London, in 23 hours, every morning at eight, except Mondays; and returns every afternoon, except Sundays, at half past four. This coach runs from *Whitmash's coach office*, adjoining the Castle Inn, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, through Wincanton and Salisbury; and every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, through Bruton, Frome, and Warminster.

*Bath.*

The Royal Mail coach, from the *London Inn*, every morning at half past nine.

Coach to Bath, from the *Castle Inn*, every day, except Sundays, at half past twelve.

Martin's caravan, from the *Bell Inn*, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, at eight in the morning.

*Bristol.*

Coach to Bristol, from *Whitmash's office*, every morning at half past eleven.

Also from the *Bell Inn*, every night at half past nine.

Also from the *George Inn*, every night at half past nine.

*Barnstaple.*

Coach to Barnstaple, through Wellington, Tiverton, and South-Molton, every day, except Sundays, from *Whitmash's office*.

*Bridport.*

Coach to Bridport, through Ilminster and Crewkerne, from the *London Inn*, every morning, except Sundays, at half past five.

*Exeter.*

Royal Mail coach, from the *London Inn*, through Wellington and Collumpton, every afternoon at half past three.

Coach to Exeter, from *Whitmask's office*, every afternoon at a quarter past one.

Also from the *Castle Inn*, every afternoon, except Sundays, at half past two.

Also from the *Bell Inn*, every night at eleven.

Also from the *George Inn*, every afternoon at half past one.

*Sidmouth.*

Coach to Sidmouth, during the season, from the *Castle Inn*.

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The inhabitants are well accommodated with an internal mode of conveyance from one part of the town to another. About the year 1770, there was only one sedan chair in the town, and that was the property of a private family; in 1790, there were four kept for hire; and now (1822) there are eleven.

**THE END.**



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